CHAMBER JAZZ CONCEPTS AND TECHNIQUES AS APPLIED TO SIX ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS

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Abstract

Chamber jazz was introduced in the 1950s with artists like Ahmad Jamal and the Modern Jazz Quartet leading the way in this new genre. It is a fusion of elements from both Western Art Music and Jazz, combining to form a unique style and sound. Chamber jazz composers and arrangers utilize many of the formal characteristics of jazz such as vamps, introductions, endings, and interludes to focus the sound of the ensemble. This is done to distinguish chamber jazz from conventional small group jazz, which tends to focus more upon long improvisatory sections. This paper will look at the musical practices important to the sound of chamber jazz through a detailed analysis of these conventions as they appear in the six compositions presented herein. This study will be aided by references to musical texts, musical manuals, scores, and recordings where appropriate.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my amazing parents David and Donna Monis. Without them, none of this work would have been even remotely possible. They are the two most loving and supportive people in the whole world, I could not be any luckier to have them in my life. They have given everything they possibly can to their children, whether it is money, love, or time, and it is an example that truly humbles and inspires me to be the best person I can be. The constant and undying support they give in every aspect of my life means the world to me, the gratitude I have for them is impossible to express in words. I love you two so much.

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Chapter 1: Overview

Jazz music has always been a unique form of art with an incredibly wide range of influences and forms of expression. Perhaps what separates jazz from other aesthetic practices is its ability to merge with other forms of music and still retain its fundamental integrity. The history of jazz is chock full of examples: the Bossa Nova-Jazz explosion of the 1960s, the Cuban-Jazz mixture that Dizzy Gillespie propagated throughout his career, the Fusion movement that began in the late 1960s, the Third Stream movement of the late 1950s, and the list goes on. In fact, the bebop movement of the 1940s emerged in part because young jazz musicians wanted jazz to be taken seriously as a more cerebral, virtuosic, and intellectual form of art, not merely dance music. In this way the bebop innovators were influenced greatly by the Western Art Music (WAM) tradition, one replete with important composers, virtuosic performers, and a richly documented history and repertoire; more crucially, WAM was critiqued, discussed, theorized, and analyzed on the basis of it being an essential aesthetic practice. One jazz sub-genre borne of the desire to combine these two musical forms is Chamber Jazz.¹

¹ Doug Ramsey, Liner Notes, *The Complete Atlantic Studio Recordings of The Modern Jazz Quartet 1956-64*, Mosaic Records L.L.C., MD7-249, 2011 [original recordings January 1956-April 1965], compact disc. Although a standard definition of the term is difficult to find, Doug Ramsey describes the music of the Modern Jazz Quartet, widely credited as being one of the forerunners of the chamber jazz style, as embodying "...elements of European classicism and bebop mastery learned directly from Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker in music bound with the strong, supple sinew of the blues."

One of the signifying features of chamber jazz is its shifting of the focus from improvisation to composition and arranging. In the early jazz, bebop, and hard-bop styles that preceded chamber jazz, the focus was more upon soloing and group interplay. This is certainly not to say that one style is necessarily "better" than another, but chamber jazz musicians wanted to shift the focus to more "formal" musical ideas: counterpoint, textural changes, intros/outros, varied instrumentation, vamps, interludes, and the like. The idea was to give the music a more durable sense of organization and form, a conception certainly borrowed from the WAM tradition. Chamber jazz composers and arrangers not only embraced ideas from WAM, but they also adopted techniques from the big band tradition. Again, the idea was to combine some of the textural nuances and devices important to the sound of the big band and pare them down for the smaller size of the chamber jazz ensemble. All of these musical ideas were taken into account when the compositional aspect of this thesis was written and arranged. The challenge when writing the compositions presented herein was combining these varied musical ideas into a cohesive, musical, and personal style.

There are many groups and individual musicians that have shaped the chamber jazz style; all of these people had at least some impact upon the compositions in this thesis. The first recordings of any significance in the chamber jazz style were recorded by the Miles Davis Nonet, which took place between 1949-50 and are now known as the *Birth of the Cool* sessions. These recordings exhibit many of the key features of the chamber jazz style with the focus upon composition and arrangement more than improvisation, a strong big band influence, and a more complex sense of counterpoint

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and harmony.² Present at these recording sessions was the pianist John Lewis, musical director for perhaps the most significant chamber jazz group of all-time, the Modern Jazz Quartet. Lewis was the architect of the Quartet's identity that fused classical, jazz, and big band elements into an original sound with a focus more upon arranged sections versus long sections of improvisation. In this way Lewis was a visionary for the chamber jazz sound and set the tone for many of the groups that came after his. John Lewis and the Modern Jazz Quartet are certainly one of the biggest influences upon the compositions presented in this thesis. Another influence that looms large over these compositions is that of pianist Ahmad Jamal. His small group concept was first introduced on his masterpiece recording *Chamber Music of the New Jazz* where he took the concept of trio playing (guitar-piano-bass) into uncharted territories. Jazz writer and critic Stanley Crouch sums up Jamal's contribution to small group jazz in the following quote which, incidentally, reads as a brief treatise of sorts on the chamber jazz conception that lies at the heart of this thesis:

Through the use of space and changes of rhythm and tempo, Jamal invented a group sound that had all the surprise and dynamic variation of an imaginatively ordered big band. His spare and subtle ideas set up grooves and riffs with a low-keyed but jaunty magnetism quite reminiscent of Count Basie: They cunningly prepare for dramatic changes of dynamics and direction. Piano, guitar, and bass function much like brass and reeds, harmony and rhythm, allowing the leader to create tension and release in a number of ways, few of them conventional. The piano is the lead voice and the guitar is sometimes the counter-voice...³

² Miles Davis, *Birth of the Cool: Scores from the Original Parts* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2002). This book presents the original scores and parts from the recording sessions and allows for a more in-depth look at all of these musical elements.

³ Stanley Crouch, *Considering Genius: Writings on Jazz* (New York: Perseus, 2006), 97.

Jamal "rarely missed an opportunity to make the most of what each of his players could do"⁴ by exploiting the unique timbral and textural options unique to each instrument, a technique used often in chamber jazz. The musicians, groups, and recordings that have been discussed are certainly the largest influences upon the musical conception of this thesis, but they are not the only ones. A few of the others that have influenced this thesis (and certainly have greatly influenced the history and development of chamber jazz): the Nat King Cole Trio, Jimmy Giuffre, Gerry Mulligan, Chico Hamilton, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and others.

The music presented herein was written with the chamber jazz aesthetic as the guiding principle; it is hoped that within these confines the music still demonstrates a strong personal identity and character. Jazz as a whole, and certainly chamber jazz, is by no stretch of the imagination a populist form of art. Although the compositions were not written exclusively for a jazz audience, it is hoped that the interested listener will dig a little bit deeper into this music and try to understand the conception and influences of the compositions. This music, like any aesthetic practice with some kind of thought behind it, is intended for anyone interested enough to engage with it thoughtfully in the hopes that he or she might come away with a positive experience and connect with it in some way.

Writing with such a specific aesthetic in mind is always a challenge and these compositions proved to be no exception. The instrumental combination chosen for this ensemble is guitar, piano, bass, and drums; one of the biggest challenges in writing and

⁴ Crouch, Considering Genius, 97.

arranging the compositions stems from instrumentation – the guitar and piano play in the same general range and have similar timbres. In most jazz situations these two instruments play very similar roles and will often clash with each other. What often happens is that one instrument does not play while the other is accompanying. The idea for this thesis was to buck this trend and try to have both instruments playing together simultaneously with musically interesting parts, while at the same time making sure neither was buried or overpowered by the other. Another challenge was to adapt ideas from big band ensembles such as riffing, contrapuntal development, textural variety, ostinato, different instrumental combinations, and call and response and apply these to the chamber jazz idiom. To do so, each of the four instruments in the ensemble was exploited to its fullest textural and timbral potential – some of the more distinct of these examples are illuminated in the body of the thesis. A further challenge was the forms that were utilized as the basis for the compositions. It was decided from the beginning to use as many standard jazz forms as possible i.e. the blues, 'rhythm changes,' Great American Songbook forms, etc. Each of the six compositions falls within one of these types of forms. The challenge when writing was to keep the compositional ideas within the confines of these conventional jazz forms without venturing too far outside of standard jazz practice.

The format of the thesis and its constituent parts require a brief explanation before moving on to the body of the paper. The thesis is organized into eight chapters, the first is the overview, the next six deal with each of the compositions of the thesis, and the final is the conclusion. Chapters Two through Seven will involve discussion of the defining

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musical features in the arrangements and will focus upon theoretical as well as conceptual ideas where appropriate. Each chapter will have a number of musical examples, referred to in this text as "Figures." Wherever it is deemed necessary the text will refer to these figures in order to better illuminate the discussion at hand, e.g., "in Fig. 3-5 we see a Bb in bar 5...". As is common practice in musical analysis, individual musical notes each will be referred to by their position on the piano keyboard, e.g., C4 is the fourth occurrence of the note C as you ascend from absolute bottom of the keyboard, Bb5 is the fifth occurrence of Bb, etc.

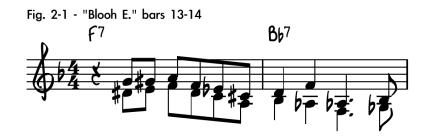
Chapter 2: "Blooh E."

Jazz draws from a wide range of influences – from European harmonic principles to Latin-American rhythms to African-American musical styles such as gospel music, field hollers, hymnal tunes, and the blues. And while the blues has its own history, rich with innovation and musicological importance, it is "also the single biggest part of the jazz tradition."⁵ One need only look at the recorded works of jazz's most influential artists to observe the influence of the blues aesthetic; Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong, Charlie Parker, and Duke Ellington, to name but a few, have recorded some of their most enduring and important works using the twelve-bar blues form. The original composition "Blooh E." attempts to honour this tradition by combining idiomatic harmonic devices, arrangement concepts, and melodic ideas with the chamber jazz aesthetic. The most salient of these will be discussed and analyzed in the accompanying chapter.

Jazz group arranging and writing has always been an integral part of the jazz tradition. Musicians and arrangers alike have always tried to exploit the musicians they have in their bands to their fullest potential. In the case of big bands, writers have the privilege of arranging for full woodwind and brass sections. When the bebop movement of the 1940s popularized "small group" jazz (quartets, quintets, etc.) the arrangement options were drastically diminished; often times these bands would have two, perhaps three voices to utilize. The challenge of writing interesting harmony parts while still

⁵ Mark Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book* (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music Co., 1995), 219.

"filling out" the sound is one of the difficulties of the chamber jazz style. Let us look at the melody as well as the harmony line in "Blooh E." in order to see how two voices can be exploited to their fullest potential. The melody line (top voice) and the harmony line (bottom voice) are played by two instruments, the piano and guitar respectively. Each example will present both voices on one stave to more easily understand the harmonic/melodic relationships.



In Fig. 2-1 we see the first two bars of the melody and harmony lines of "Blooh E." In bar 1 we see both lines moving in parallel motion in thirds (meaning the notes are related to each other by a diatonic or chromatic third) which is a common jazz arranging device, especially for only two voices. Noted jazz theorist, arranger, and pianist Bill Dobbins confirms "thirds are usually the strongest intervals to use with..." two voices, "...they usually sound more full than fourths and more consonant than seconds."⁶ However in bar 2 on beats 2 and 3 we see a quick departure from this formula with the bottom voice moving in contrary motion to the top voice – as the top note moves up, the

⁶ Bill Dobbins, *Jazz Arranging & Composing: A Linear Approach* (Advance Music, 2005), 24.

bottom moves down, and vice versa. This is one of several contrapuntal techniques used in this section of the composition.

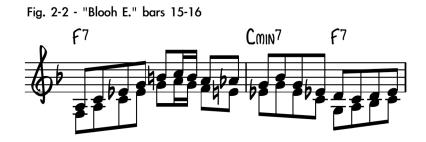


Fig. 2-2 shows the next two bars of the composition and demonstrates yet another contrapuntal device. As in Fig. 1, Fig. 2's most prominent texture is that of parallel motion in thirds, however there is a slight change in bar 2 that adds a subtle new texture to the sonic palate. On beat 3 there is a G3 that appears, out of context, rather obtrusive – it is creating a perfect fifth interval, a rather jarring texture compared to thirds. However, when we take the motion of the bottom voice in context and take into consideration where it is moving to and how, it makes sense – it is an F Mixolydian scale fragment. This particular contrapuntal example shows how even changing one note can drastically alter the sound of the line. Had that G3 been a Bb4 (the note a diatonic third below the D4 melody note), it would have sounded much the same as the parallel motion that has preceded it. Although this subtle inflection on the bottom voice doesn't necessarily "leap out," it does create an understated texture change that helps give the overall sound more variety and interest.



The next two bars of "Blooh E.," shown in Fig. 2-3, introduce some harmonic alterations to the otherwise diatonic textures that have preceded it. In standard jazz practice the IV chord, in this case a Bb7, is stated in bar 5-6 of the blues form. This dominant seventh chord can be altered in any number of ways in order to add harmonic colour, Fig. 2-3 shows two common alterations. The chord symbols in brackets are used to indicate the harmonic alteration being implied by the two voices. In bar 1 we observe an Ab4 (the b7 of the chord) in the bottom voice and a Cb5 (the b9) in the top voice. Taking into consideration the Bb7 being stated in the harmonic progression, these two notes combine quite clearly to imply a Bb7^{b9} harmonic alteration. Admittedly it is difficult to hear this in the context of the performance, however the ear does notice a slight "rub" between the two voices at this point. A similar harmonization technique is applied on beat 3 of bar 2. We observe a B natural (the b9 of the chord) in the bottom voice and a Db (enharmonic to C# the #9 of the chord) in the top voice. These two notes imply a Bb7^{b9#9} tonality. This harmonic alteration is easier to hear and lasts a full quarter note longer than the previous example and occurs on a "strong" beat 3. As we can see, a thorough understanding of the many harmonic colours available are necessary for the fullest exploitation of the two-voice texture, especially in a chamber jazz or small group setting.



Up until this point the predominant texture of the two voices has been thirds moving in parallel motion. In the next two bars of "Blooh E.," shown in Fig. 2-4, we see a new texture introduced – parallel sixths. This slight variation on the formula adds a subtle new sound to the overall texture of the two voices. And in bar 2 of this example we can see contrary motion utilized quite clearly. On beat 1 we see a diatonic sixth between the voices, then the bottom voice leaps down to a B4 and moves upwards (in contrary motion to the top voice) to a D4 creating once again the "thirds" texture of the preceding examples. The uses of contrary motion, as well as the movement from parallel sixths to thirds are just two methods for expanding the sonic possibilities of dual-voice arranging.



Fig. 2-5 illustrates the final four bars of the melody section and introduces no new textures or techniques. It is a further demonstration of the effectiveness of parallel motion in thirds in the context of two-voice writing. However, taking into account all of the preceding examples in this section and all of the contrapuntal techniques and harmonic

alterations used therein, it is easy to see how far the two-voice texture can be stretched. Furthermore, this shows adherence to the chamber jazz tradition as it is not merely a "head arrangement" thrown together at the last minute but a meticulously thought-out contrapuntal passage designed to both strengthen the unique contours of the melody and to "fill out" the overall sound of the ensemble.

Big band arrangers often write "riff" sections underneath the solo sections of an arrangement in order to provide rhythmic and melodic stimulus for the soloist. A riff is a catchy, repeated rhythmic/melodic motif that lends a sense of structure and rhythmic propulsion to an arrangement. Big bands like the Bennie Moten Orchestra, the Count Basie Orchestra, Jimmie Lunceford's band, as well as countless others, have used the riff to great effect.⁷ Consequently, many small group jazz pianists tried to incorporate a pared-down version of the riff accompaniment into their own playing. Two celebrated exponents of this style are Horace Silver and Red Garland.⁸ In the Miles Davis Quintet of the 1950s (otherwise know as the First Great Quintet) Red Garland brought his percussive riff-like accompaniment approach to the small group setting. He and drummer Philly Joe Jones were known to create "shots" and "riffs" much like those of a big band.

⁷ Gunther Schuller, *Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1968). Schuller gives a great explanation, as well as concrete musical examples, of the riff and its history in early jazz on pp. 28-31.

⁸ Jeb Patton, *An Approach to Comping: The Essentials* (Petaluma: Sher Music, 2013). Patton has excellent transcriptions of Silver and Garland's accompaniment styles which show quite clearly how both players could be very "riff-like" in their approach – special attention should be paid to Patton's transcription of Silver's riff figures on *Blowin' The Blues Away* (pp. 224).

One of Garland's more famous accompaniment figures occurs on the tune "Straight, No Chaser" from the Miles Davis recording *Milestones*.⁹ The melody note of his 'riff voicings' is transcribed in Fig. 2-6.¹⁰ Garland applies this same 'riff melody' over the chord structure of the rest of the blues form.



Taking into account how important the riff figure as an arrangement device is to the history of jazz and how much of an impact the Miles Davis Quintet had on the sound of small group jazz, it was important to incorporate both influences into the arrangement of "Blooh E." In the third chorus¹¹ of the guitar solo section the piano is given the Red Garland "melody" fully realized as piano voicings. At this point it is important to briefly analyze these voicings and their relation to the riff melody. In some cases it will be necessary to alter the chord to fit the melody.

⁹ Miles Davis, *Milestones*, Sony Music CK 85203, 2001 [original recording February-March 1958], compact disc.

¹⁰ The term melody is used here to describe what we hear as the 'melody' of the riff and is in this case the top note of a piano voicing. This riff starts at 4:13 of the track.

¹¹ The term 'chorus' is used to describe one full expression of the harmonic framework of the composition, every time we arrive at the very beginning of the harmonic progression we have begun a new chorus; in this case it refers to the 12-bar blues form.



In Fig. 2-7 we see the first four bars of the riff as it appears in the piano part. We observe the riff "melody" intact with piano voicings harmonizing the top note. Each of these voicings are common piano voicing structures, and fortunately the melody note F4 fits smoothly with the chords. However on beat 3 of bar 4 we see a more complex chord that has been altered to work with the melody note Ab. The harmony in this bar is commonly an F7 chord, however an Ab melody note does not work with an unaltered F7 chord. The Ab (enharmonic to G#) is the #9 of F7, so in this case it was decided to alter the chord to an $F7^{\#9,b13}$. The "function" of the chord hasn't changed, only the chord colour – a common practice among jazz pianists.



The next four bars are given in Fig. 2-8 and once again not much has to be done to the fundamental chord progression in order to make it "work" with the riff melody. The only significant alteration occurs once again on beat 2 of bar 4. In this case the Ab

top note is sounding on top of a D7 chord. Unfortunately, Ab does not fit with an unaltered D7 chord, but when the chord is changed to a $D7^{b9,\#11}$ the Ab works and the integrity of the riff remains intact.



The final four bars are presented in Fig. 9 and we observe two significant chord alterations. The first occurs in bar 1 with the $C7^{(9,11)}$ harmonizing the F melody note. Ordinarily, an F is considered an "avoid" note¹² on a C7 chord, and the choices are either to alter the chord to a C7sus4 chord or alter the melody note. But considering the tempo of the composition, how briefly the chord is sounded, and the desire to leave the riff melody unchanged, the decision was made to keep it a C7 chord with the "avoid" in the melody. And again in bar 4 we see another rather complex chord symbol. In this instance we have an underlying C7 tonality that we need to alter in order to work with an Ab melody note; the $C7^{\#9,b13}$ was chosen as it is a rather common chord and works well with an Ab (the b13) on top of the voicing. This piano accompaniment section has warranted

¹² Mark Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book* (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music Co., 1989). In chapter nine (entitled Scale Theory) Levine gives a great definition and explanation of what the 'avoid note' is and how it functions. In brief, it is the 4th note of the scale, a perfect fourth above the root, that is quite dissonant when sounded with either a major or dominant chord.

discussion and analysis for several reasons. One, it is used as a way to adapt the big band model of riffing underneath soloists and applying it to a chamber group setting. Two, it is an attempt to "codify" the accompaniment style of Red Garland into a bona fide arrangement technique, one that is used in this instance to provide a sense of structure and shape to the guitar solo section of the composition. Finally, it is utilized as a conscious "tip of the hat" to the enduring influence of the Miles Davis Quintet on the sound of small group and chamber jazz.

Any good jazz accompanist knows how to bring out the best in fellow musicians. It involves playing close attention to dynamics, group interplay, texture, what the soloist is doing, etc. A good accompanist also knows how to "build" the solo, this could mean playing very sparsely and quietly behind the soloist at the beginning of the solo and as the solo progresses matching the soloist's intensity. To do so, the accompanist must have a firm command of the many available textures. This could mean playing dense chord structures, or very stark voicings, or perhaps playing nothing at all. Taking all of these facts into consideration, we will now turn our attention to the piano solo section of "Blooh E." and take a look at the guitar accompaniment part and its significance to the composition as a whole.

John Lewis of the Modern Jazz Quartet was known to play single lines when accompanying a soloist, a surprising tendency considering the wide range of chord voicings available to the jazz pianist. But he used this device to great effect, creating interesting counter-melodies and riffs underneath the improvisation while never taking attention away from the soloist.¹³ It was with this in mind that the guitar accompaniment part in "Blooh E." was written. Let us quickly analyze this background to gain a better understanding of what melodic concepts are being utilized.



In Fig. 2-10 we see the guitar riff figure as it appears in the first 8 bars of the guitar accompaniment part. Melodically these notes impart a "blues" tonality with the use of the so-called "blue" note (in this case Ab, the flatted third of the key). When John Lewis would play these types of single note accompaniments, he gave them more of an improvisatory quality by varying the pattern slightly each time he played it. Accordingly, the figure is altered rhythmically in the arrangement in order to capture and pay homage to Lewis' accompaniment approach. Fig. 2-11 shows the variation of the pattern as it appears in the last 4 bars of the blues form. We see a slight change in rhythm, but most notably we observe a change in register. The notes C and D that were below the staff in Fig. 2-10 are now on the staff an octave higher giving the chorus a sense of finality and providing a comfortable transition into the next chorus.

¹³ The Modern Jazz Quartet, *The Complete Atlantic Studio Recordings of The Modern Jazz Quartet 1956-64*, Mosaic Records L.L.C. MD7-249, 2011, compact disc. Examples of this type of accompaniment can be found on many of the songs in this box set, but special attention should be paid to "Bag's Groove" [original recording April 1957] as it features some of Lewis' more inventive and "bluesy" single-note accompaniment.



The second chorus of the guitar accompaniment sounds quite different from the first, as one can observe in Fig. 2-12, and warrants discussion for a number of reasons.



First and foremost, it is a much busier pattern and occurs in a higher register than any of the figures in the first chorus and thus builds upon the rhythmic and melodic "drive" of the first chorus; in this way it is much like a riff figure one might hear in a big band. Melodically, the second chorus discerns itself from the first chorus most obviously by the use of a repeated Eb (the b7 of the chord) which gives this riff figure a decidedly Mixolydian sound.¹⁴ This same figure is repeated a perfect fourth higher for bars 5-6 of the chorus in order to fit within the Bb7 tonality of those bars.



¹⁴ Randy Felts, *Reharmonization Techniques* (Boston, MA: Berklee Press, 2002), 134. "The characteristic note of [the] Mixolydian mode is b7" giving the scale its distinctive sound.

In Fig. 2-13 we observe the final four bars of the guitar accompaniment section in "Blooh E." In bars 1-2 we see the two highest notes of the entire two-chorus section as well as a drastic change in rhythmic density that lends a sense of climax and finality to the figure. Using John Lewis as a model, it is clear that an interesting and well thought-out accompaniment is possible using only a single-note texture. Furthermore, it seems logical to use the guitar to exploit the rhythmic and melodic potential of single-note accompaniment, especially when taking into account the relatively limited (compared to the piano) harmonic and sonic possibilities of the instrument. Once again, these types of repeated figures are commonly found in big band music and are an important characteristic of chamber group arranging. One need only listen to music from the aforementioned Modern Jazz Quartet with John Lewis, the Miles Davis *Birth of the Cool* sessions,¹⁵ and countless others to appreciate this fact and to hear how the arrangement for "Blooh E." places it firmly in the rich chamber jazz tradition.

Reharmonization is a powerful tool in the jazz arranger's toolkit and involves taking the pre-existing harmony and altering it any number of ways to suit the composition or arrangement and provide richer harmonic interest. As it is a relatively simple progression, the blues form is ripe for reharmonization. We find examples in the compositions of Bud Powell ("Dance of the Infidels" a drastically reharmonized blues progression), John Coltrane ("Mr. P.C." a minor blues) and Charlie Parker ("Blues for Alice", whose chord sequence became known as 'Bird's blues changes') to name only a

¹⁵ Davis, Birth of the Cool: Scores from the Original Parts.

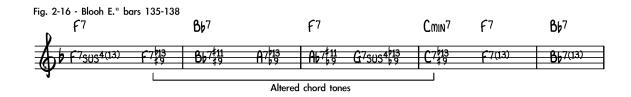
few. However, there is one aspect of the blues progression that is so fundamental to the blues sound that none of these composers change – the movement to the IV chord in the fifth bar. What all of these compositions do is present different ways of arriving at, and moving from, the IV chord. Reharmonization is used in "Blooh E." as a way to harmonize a short melody played by both the guitar and piano (shown in Fig. 2-14), this short melody is used as a four-bar "interlude" of sorts in the trading section of the arrangement. The theory behind this reharmonization, as well as the techniques used, will be discussed below.



In each of the next few musical examples we will examine this same section of "Blooh E." with the melody removed, and the chord progression moved onto the staff. The standard blues progression will be included above the staff to better understand the harmonic foundation and give context to the reharmonized progression.



In jazz harmony "the quality of a chord (major, minor, dominant, diminished, etc.) can be changed to another quality, even when you are keeping the same root."¹⁶ There are two such examples in this section (identified in Fig. 2-15). The first occurs in bar 1 with the standard F7 chord quality changed to an F7sus4 chord quality. The second example is in bar 4 where we see a minor chord (Cmin7) "change its quality to… dominant."¹⁷ In both examples the root remains the same but the chord quality is changed, which serves to "dramatically alter the mood"¹⁸ of the melody line.



It is common jazz practice to not only play the original chords but to add extensions to these chords. For example, in Bb7 there are four basic chord tones, Bb (root), D (3rd), F (5th), and Ab (b7th). We can then expand this chord by adding its extensions, C (9th), Eb (11th), and G (13th). The Bb7⁽¹³⁾ in bar 5 has one added extension yielding a more "colourful" sound than the basic Bb7 in the original progression. Furthermore, any of these extensions "…can be raised or lowered by half steps to yield alterations to the colour or quality of the chord."¹⁹ In bar 2 we see a Bb7 chord with the

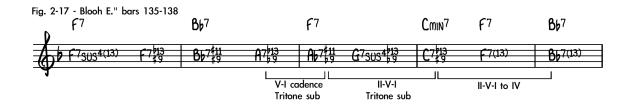
¹⁶ Andy Laverne, Handbook of Chord Substitutions (Ekay Music, Inc., 1991) 8.

¹⁷ Laverne, *Handbook of Chord Substitutions*, 8.

¹⁸ Laverne, *Handbook of Chord Substitutions*, 8.

¹⁹ Laverne, *Handbook of Chord Substitutions*, 15.

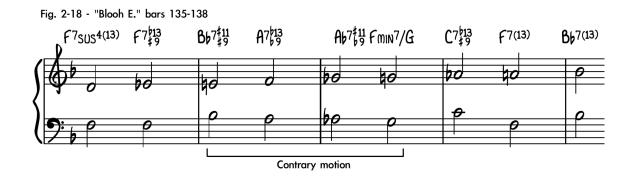
11th and 9th raised one half step creating the chord Bb7^{#9,#11} with "altered chord tones." In Fig. 2-16 we see extensive use of altered chord tones to impart a richer, more colourful sound to the chords. This reharmonization technique also serves to differentiate this new chord progression from the sound of the original blues progression.



It is imperative at this point to discuss the harmonic motion of the chords in this section and how they relate to the original progression. In bar 2 of Fig. 2-17 we see an A7 chord moving to an Ab7 chord labeled as a "tritone sub." Tritone substitution "...describes the fact that a dominant 7th chord can be replaced with another dominant 7th whose root is a tritone away from the original"²⁰ and is one of the most commonly used reharmonization devices in jazz. In this particular instance, preceding the Ab7 with an Eb7 would be the most conventional option; this expresses the "V-I cadence" so important to Western music theory. Substituting the Eb7 for its tritone equivalent A7 expresses the same cadential motion in a slightly different manner and allows for the chromatically descending bass motion that is so crucial to the sound of this reharmonized section (this will be discussed shortly). The second example of tritone substitution occurs in bar 3. The two chords in this bar are part of a II-V-I progression moving to the C7 in bar 4. The II chord in this instance would have most commonly been Dmin7, however

²⁰ Laverne, *Handbook of Chord Substitutions*, 6.

this Dmin7 is substituted for its tritone equivalent Ab7. In bar 4 the II-V harmonic movement is unchanged and resolves to the IV chord in bar 5. As discussed earlier, the IV chord is the defining feature of the blues progression. At this point, all of the salient harmonic features of this section have been closely analyzed; let us now look at this same section from a melodic/contrapuntal perspective.



In Fig. 2-18 the two outer voices, the melody and bass, are shown. Additionally, the syncopated rhythms of this section have been lined up to a half-note grid for easier analysis. In the top voice we observe a simple pattern, starting from a D4 the melody moves upwards in half steps to its ultimate destination Bb5. In the bottom voice there is a strong sense of downward motion, most obviously in bars 2-3. Looking at how these two voices relate to each other contrapuntally there is certainly a sense of contrary motion, a device commonly found in jazz arranging as it will "…yield new harmonies and provide new melodic interest."²¹ Additionally, the two voices mirror each other in their intervallic movement (half steps) providing a homogeneous sonic texture and giving the section a predominantly "chromatic" sound. The melodic/contrapuntal component of this section

²¹ Laverne, Handbook of Chord Substitutions, 28.

gives it a potent sense of forward motion that ends with a strong resolution to the IV chord in bar 5.

The blues is the most common form in the jazz idiom because it is so malleable harmonically, rhythmically, and melodically and can fit within any type of musical conception. There are certainly formal and conventional boundaries when working within the blues structure; it is a twlve-bar form with a relatively confining harmonic progression. Add to this the fact that in the case of chamber jazz writing there is somewhat limited instrumentation. But, despite these concerns, there is so much that can be expressed within the limits of the blues form. In "Blooh E." we have analyzed and discussed issues of two-voice writing, piano and guitar accompaniment concepts, and harmonic and contrapuntal/melodic considerations and we have seen how they can all work within the confines of the blues while still expressing some of the more cerebral aspects of the chamber jazz idiom. And no matter how deep into theoretical musical discussion we take these ideas, the integrity of the blues and the chamber jazz sounds are never lost. This is a tribute to the strength and durability of both of these musical conceptions.

Chapter 3: "Once, In Spring"

The waltz has been an important part of music for hundreds of years. Classical composers have utilized this time signature in a number of different ways. In the world of jazz however, waltz time was not as readily accepted. It was not until Sonny Rollins recorded "Valse Hot" that jazz musicians really started to believe you could actually *swing* in ³/₄ time. Waltz time presents unique compositional as well as improvisational challenges. In the composition "Once, In Spring" these challenges were tackled head on in a number of different ways, the most salient of which will be discussed in this chapter.

There are a number of waltz compositions in the Great American Songbook that have become jazz standards; these include "Emily," "Moon River," "My Favourite Things," "Alice in Wonderland," and many others. Perhaps the one played most often is "Someday My Prince Will Come." This song has been recorded at one time or another by many prominent jazz musicians, but without a doubt the most famous version comes from Miles Davis on his album *Someday My Prince Will Come.*²² As previously discussed, Miles Davis has been a tremendous influence upon chamber jazz. Jazz musicians have always looked to his bands for ideas about how to arrange for their own groups. In "Once, In Spring" the vamp/interlude sections are heavily influenced by Miles Davis' recording of "Someday My Prince Will Come." The bass vamp that opens the

²² Miles Davis, *Someday My Prince Will Come*, Sony Music CK 65919, 1999 [original recording March 1961], compact disc.

Davis version has become a standard introductory device for jazz compositions in waltz time. His version of "Someday" is played in the key of Bb major; the repeated note in the bass is an F, the dominant of the key. This sets up a feeling of tension in the bass part that is resolved when they arrive at the tonic chord. Additionally, Wynton Kelly (the pianist on this recording) is playing dense voicing structures above the vamp implying different harmonic progressions and alterations.



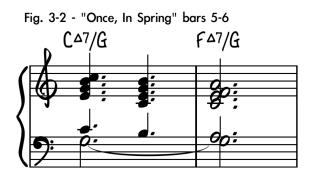
Fig. 3-1 - "Someday My Prince Will Come" excerpt from Miles Davis recording

Fig. 3-1 shows what Kelly is playing in bars 5-8 of the introductory vamp to "Someday My Prince Will Come." In this example we see a Bbmaj7 chord in bar 1 and an Ebmaj7 chord in bar 3. The pianist will distribute these chords as such: the four-note 7th chords on the treble clef are in the right hand and the single notes in the bass clef are in the left hand. In both of these chords the major 7th (A and D respectively) is on the top of the voicing (the "melody"); in the bass clef we see these notes doubled an octave below. This voicing technique that doubles the melody note an octave below is widely known to piano players as the "Shearing Style"²³ but it is in fact a technique drawn from

²³ Mark Levine, *Jazz Piano Masterclass with Mark Levine: The Drop 2 Book* (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music Co., 2006), 6. This jazz piano technique was popularized by pianist George Shearing, thus the "Shearing Style."

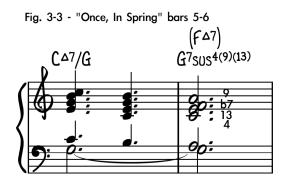
big band writing. Arrangers will often write for brass or reed sections in this closely voiced style – this is another example of chamber jazz innovators drawing techniques and ideas from big bands. The introductory vamp to "Once, In Spring" uses a similar style as Miles Davis' version of "Someday My Prince Will Come" in both the piano and bass parts.

"Once, In Spring" opens with a vamp that is used throughout the tune as "interludes" to transition from the solo sections to the melody statements as well as the ending of the composition. In the discussion of the piano and guitar vamp sections that will follow, it is crucial to remember that the bass is playing a G in quarter notes reinforcing rhythmically and harmonically the dominant pedal (the song is in C major). Let us first discuss the piano part and the harmonic implications therein.

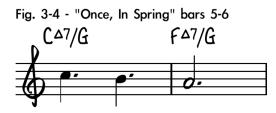


In Fig. 3-2 the first two bars of the piano part are presented. These particular voicings are of the "Shearing Style." However, a G has been added to the bottom of the left hand part in order to strengthen the sound of the G dominant pedal that underpins this section. Harmonically, this section moves between the tonic and the dominant of the key, although at first it looks as though it is moving between the tonic and the subdominant.

The Fmaj7/G in the second bar does not function as an F major chord. Taking into account the G bass note, it is actually a $G7sus4^{(9,13)}$ chord. In Fig. 3-3 this new chord symbol has been added directly above the staff, the "old" chord symbol is now represented above the staff in brackets. The numbers added to bar 2 show the chord tones each note represents in relation to the G bass note to show that this chord is in fact a dominant functioning chord, not a subdominant.



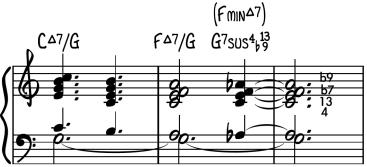
Before moving on with the harmonic/voicing analysis of the piano part, the guitar part should be discussed briefly to understand how it functions in relation to the entire ensemble.



In Fig. 3-4 we see the first two bars of the guitar part of "Once, In Spring." The guitar part for both the vamp and interlude sections of this composition doubles the top note of the piano voicings. This helps to bring out the "melody" being created by the

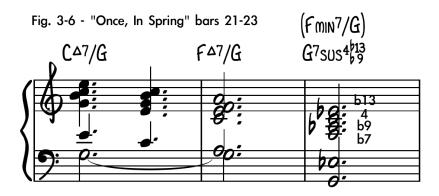
piano part. And by only making the guitar part a single note line, it allows the guitar to stay out of the way of the rather dense chord structures sounding in the piano part. This is a simple strategy for the guitar and piano to complement each other while at the same time utilizing the unique timbral qualities of each instrument.





In bars 13-15 of the introductory vamp, a new chord colour is introduced. In bar 2 we see the chord Fmin(maj)7/G, which is actually a G7sus4^(b9,13). Once again, while the integrity of the I-V harmonic structure is not changed, the colour of the chord is. This allows the flow of the vamp section to continue and is a testament to how much musical interest can be added by adjusting only one note – in this case A, the natural 9th of the chord, is lowered one half step to Ab, the flatted 9th of the chord. The third and final harmonic colouration is added in bar 23 of the introductory vamp; bars 21-23 are presented in Fig. 3-6. In this example we see a Fmin7/G, which is in fact a G7sus4^{(b9,b13).} Once again, the integrity of the harmonic interest. As before, only one note is altered, this time it is the 13th (E natural) lowered one half step to b13 (Eb). This brings a sense of finality to the section and resolves agreeably to the tonic chord at the beginning of the

main melody section. The rest of the vamp and interlude sections in the piece follow the same rules, albeit with different melody notes: the bass vamps on G while the piano plays melodies that work with the Cmaj7 and three colours of G7 chords with the guitar doubling these melodies. These sections show that a composer can be strongly influence by another musician's concept (in this case Miles Davis) while still expressing a personal aesthetic conception. These sections also show an effective way of working within the confines of the ensemble and its particular instrumental limitations.



During the bass solo section in "Once, In Spring," the same arrangement technique we see in the vamp sections is utilized, but in a completely different manner. During the bass solo it was decided to use the same "Shearing Style" technique for the piano background, and as before the guitar doubles the melody created by the piano voicings. As is common in jazz practice, the bass solos over the harmonic progression of the composition. This composition is broken into two sixteen-bar sections, thirty-two bars in total; these sections are classified as A and B. The initial eight bars of both the A and B sections of the song's form feature a piano/guitar background part, the second eight bars have just the drums accompanying the bass solo. The idea here being a contrast of the active initial eight bars with the relatively "empty" following eight bars; these types of backgrounds are utilized quite commonly in big band writing, they give the solo section a sense of structure. Let us now take a look at the voicing structures and chord qualities utilized here and how they relate to the background's melody.



Fig. 3-7 presents the piano background part from bars 1-9 of section A3 (bars 97-105 in the score). Once again, the melody note is doubled an octave below in the left hand and the guitar doubles the melody line. In both Figs. 3-7 and 3-8 the melody and voicings are written in a range to allow the bass more "room" to solo. The bass obviously sits in a lower range than the other instruments and had the voicings been written an octave lower they would clash with the bass's range. However, the bass is now free to solo any way that it chooses, this also allows two distinct aural ranges to be occupied simultaneously and gives this section a richness of sound.



The first four bars of Fig. 3-8 share the same melody as the initial four bars of Fig. 3-7. This repetition gives the listener something to latch on to and identify as the melodic character of the background. However, the next four bars have a different

harmonic progression than the comparable four bars in Fig. 3-7 and consequently have a different melody. This gives the listener an adequate sense of "theme and variation" and creates an interesting melody in the background section while at the same time not losing sight of the fact that the bass is featured and the background part is complementary.

Although the waltz has become ubiquitous in common jazz practice, it is not without its own unique challenges. Because of the shortened meter, the harmonic progressions can start to become constricting compositionally and improvisationally. "Once, In Spring" tackles this problem by contrasting relatively fast moving harmony with long vamp sections that give the form a sense of tension and release. This composition also shows how the technical conventions of one instrument can be expanded to include and utilize other instruments; in this case the "Shearing Style" of piano voicing is expanded to include the guitar doubling the melody, fortifying its sound as well as strengthening its character and presence. "Once, In Spring" also shows that it is possible to pay homage to the innovators and shapers of the chamber jazz style while at the same time using their musical ideas as vehicles for personal feeling and expression.

Chapter 4: "Down the Path"

There are many tools at the disposal of the skilled jazz arranger that he or she knows how to employ to most effectively serve the composition and the ensemble. Many of these tools are chosen based upon personal preference and the type of "sound" the arranger wants the ensemble to have. Some of these choices include contrapuntal development, textural variety, and different instrumental combinations. One ensemble/arranger's sound differs from another due in part to a subconscious preference for certain stylistic elements over others. For example, Ahmad Jamal focused much of his effort upon having unique arrangements of standard material with his various trios, exploiting each of the three instruments in the ensemble to their fullest potential. He did however sacrifice the focus upon group interplay and improvisation that would define the Bill Evans Trio. Borne of these stylistic preferences is a personal style and voice. In the song "Down the Path," several different arrangement techniques idiomatic to chamber jazz are utilized to communicate a personal expression of the composition.



Fig. 4-1 shows the introduction to "Down the Path" as it appears in the piano part. This part is played with the chord voicings on top in the right had and the two bottom notes in the left hand, it is written on one staff because the voicings are too low to be read easily in the treble clef. The harmonic structure of these four bars is simple, it moves back and forth between the tonic chord and the subdominant chord. The I-IV-I harmonic movement is common in Western music and is known as a plagal cadence. This type of progression is often used in jazz to add harmonic motion to an otherwise static major chord section. The left hand is playing an Eb2 and Bb3 creating a strong foundation that solidifies the Ebmaj7 tonality. Although the progression remains the same throughout this section, a melodic variant is introduced in bars 3-4. In the first two bars, the "melody" stays the same because the Eb4 on top of the Ebmaj7 chord is also found in Abmaj7, in the interest of smooth voice leading this common tone is not moved. In bars 3-4 the Ebmaj7 chord's colour is changed slightly with the addition of a 9^{th} extension. Because of this, the voice leading is different than that used previously, this time moving upwards to the Abmaj7. As a result, the melody also moves upwards from an F4 to a G4. This small change in the melodic movement adds another layer of musical interest to the section and helps lead the composition smoothly into the main melody section. This introductory section is used once again in the arrangement as an interlude between the guitar solo and the bridge section leading to the end of the composition. An additional musical "ripple" is added in bar 4, as seen in Fig. 4-2, with the C7^{#9,b13} on beat 4. Through a V-I relationship this C7 leads us smoothly to the first chord of the bridge section, an Fmin6 chord. The melody created by this new voicing is different from that of the introductory phrase and helps lead to the bridge section in a slightly different way, which helps distinguish this section from its predecessor.



Before delving into more musical analysis, it is worth discussing some of the orchestration and conventional jazz techniques used in "Down the Path," how they affect the overall sound of the composition, and how they fit into the chamber jazz tradition as a whole. A running theme throughout this paper has been that of maximizing the potential of each instrument in an ensemble in order to realize its full potential. This is a common practice in the chamber jazz idiom. Because there are fewer instruments than a big band or jazz orchestra it is important to know each of the instruments' sonic and textural capabilities in order to "fill out" the sound. While all of this is certainly important to the sound of chamber jazz, another key element in that style is knowing when to leave some instruments out completely, yielding new and interesting instrumental combinations. This is quite common in chamber jazz. John Lewis would often have only the piano and vibes begin a composition,²⁴ or omit only the drums, allowing the bass, piano, and vibes to play together,²⁵ and Ahmad Jamal would use the solo piano introduction as an arrangement

²⁴ "Summertime" from The Modern Jazz Quartet, *The Complete Atlantic Studio Recordings of The Modern Jazz Quartet 1956-64*, Mosaic Records L.L.C. MD7-249, 2011 [original recording July 1964], compact disc.

²⁵ "Angel Eyes" from The Modern Jazz Quartet, *The Complete Atlantic Studio Recordings of The Modern Jazz Quartet 1956-64*, Mosaic Records L.L.C. MD7-249, 2011 [original recording January 1956], compact disc.

device.²⁶ This allows the arranger to put the "spotlight" on the remaining instruments and explore their sonic possibilities in a way that may not have been possible before. And it also enables the arranger to "change" the sound of the ensemble providing new musical interest for the listener. As discussed above, "Down the Path" opens with a guitar and piano introduction (the bass and drums are omitted). The composition follows an AABA form and after the introduction the first two A sections employ only guitar and piano: the guitar is playing the melody with the piano accompanying.²⁷ In the context of a ballad this technique works well; it places the focus upon the melody and amplifies the aesthetic qualities often associated with the jazz ballad, resulting in a composition that is softer and quieter than the others. And it fits in with the artistic principles of chamber jazz as it allows the pianist considerable freedom within an accompaniment role, while at the same time strictly regulating the dynamic level of the ensemble by omitting the bass and drums. The tension of the beginning of the composition is finally relieved at the bridge section when the bass and drums enter and the full ensemble is playing once again. All of these components are used quite deliberately to express a personal conception of this composition and show how effective the simple omission of instruments can be to the aural "landscape" of an arrangement as well as to the mood it imparts on the listener.

²⁶ "Like Someone In Love" from Ahmad Jamal Trio, *The Complete Ahmad Jamal Trio Argo Sessions 1956-62*, Mosaic Records L.L.C. MD9-246, 2010 [original recording January 1962], compact disc.

²⁷ In the sections of the song where the guitar plays the melody, the melody line is also included in the piano part. The instruction in the piano part reads "Melody given for the purposes of accompaniment." Having the melody written out allows the accompanist to better compliment the melody with their choice of voicings, fills, etc.

A common jazz practice is codified within the arrangement of "Down the Path." When jazz musicians play a ballad one of the most oft-used (arrangement) techniques is to move to a double-time feel. In this case, the word 'arrangement' is put in brackets because it is not always decided ahead of time when to move into a double time feel, especially in the context of a jam session or a more casual performance where the only thing the musicians will decide ahead of time is the song they are going to play. In this instance they each rely upon their years of experience, group interplay, and listening to each other intently in order to guide their performance. In a ballad, one of the musicians in the group might imply a double time feel in their solo or accompaniment and the rest of the musicians will follow suit. Even though the musicians are playing at what sounds like a much faster tempo, the harmonic structure of the composition is still going at the same rate as the original tempo. In "Down the Path" this movement from ballad tempo to double time feel and back to ballad tempo is written into the arrangement (section C2 and D2 in the score). This is done as an attempt to codify a common jazz practice and to regulate the ensemble sound in order to express a personal conception of the composition through the use of chamber jazz conventions.



The bridge section of "Down the Path" sees the melody move from the guitar to the piano part, freeing the guitar to play a counterpoint line. Both the melody (top voice)

and guitar counterpoint line (bottom voice) are presented on one staff in the following examples and both voices have been moved up one octave from their original parts for easier reading and analysis. In Fig. 4-3 we see the first four bars of the bridge section and just a quick glance reveals how much busier the bottom line is than the top. However the section does not sound cluttered because the guitar has a rich, deep tone when played in this register and consequently does not interfere with the melody line. In the first two bars of Fig. 4-3 there is a strong sense of contrary motion between the two voices; anytime the melody moves down, the counterpoint line moves up and vice versa. The melody line is moving primarily in leaps, giving it a strong sense of motion; the bottom voice counters the melody by moving principally in stepwise motion, expressing scale fragments and anchoring the harmony of the section. In bar 3 the melody line is moving downwards in quarter notes. The guitar line takes advantage of the space this affords by using sixteenth note subdivisions. This draws attention away from the melody temporarily and puts it onto the guitar line, giving the bridge section an interesting "push and pull" effect between the two voices. The eighth-note triplet figure we see in bar 4 is a distinguishing feature of the melody; the guitar line is accentuating the movement of the melody by moving in direct contrary motion.

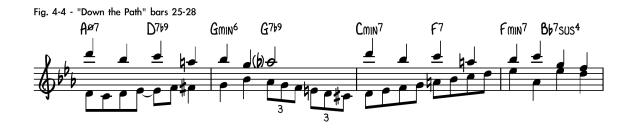


Fig. 4-4 shows the last four bars of the bridge section. In bars 1-2 the melody is moving in a generally downward direction; to compliment the melody the counterpoint line is once again moving in contrary motion. In bar 2 the bottom voice uses the space afforded by the half note in the melody and moves downward by step in eighth note triplets. Because the counterpoint line is rhythmically dense it temporarily takes attention away from the melody line. In bar 3 the melody is again moving in a general downward motion in quarter notes; the counterpoint line moves upwards in eighth notes by step. The counterpoint line in this bar expresses an entire Bb major scale from D4 to D5. The reason it works in this bar is because the two chords, Cmin7 and F7, are within the Bb major key center. In the first half of bar 4 the counterpoint line has an Eb followed by an Ab, the two guide-tones of Fmin7. This is an example of the counterpoint line being able to express the essence of the harmonic structure while still having an interesting melodic quality. Once again, we have seen how counterpoint can be used to fully express the sonic potential of a chamber jazz ensemble while providing an interesting second voice that can, within the span of eight bars, provide melodic interest, fill in sonic space, add rhythmic impetus, and imply harmonic structure, all while complimenting the melodic line.

The ballad form presents interesting challenges to the jazz musician, composer, and arranger. One must always be aware of tempo issues, intonation problems, and matters of tuning. However, for all of its challenges, the form allows for much creative freedom. As we have seen, one can achieve a coherent and personal expression of the jazz ballad through a careful use of voicing techniques, instrumental doublings, omission

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of instruments, contrapuntal methods, and codified jazz practices, all established techniques within the chamber jazz idiom.

Chapter 5: "Sweet Tooth"

Other than the 12 bar blues, there is no musical form more important to the jazz tradition as the 32-bar harmonic structure that is know most commonly as 'rhythm changes.' The form gets its name from the George/Ira Gershwin composition "I Got Rhythm" that made its debut in the 1930 musical Girl Crazy.²⁸ The chord structure of this song, with its distinctive I-VI-II-V harmonic motion, quickly became a favourite amongst jazz musicians. There are literally hundreds of jazz compositions written on the same harmonic progression, some of the more well known are: "Anthropology," "Lester Leaps In," "Cottontail," "Oleo," and "Rhythm-a-ning." It was also seen as one of the benchmarks by which a jazz musician's soloing capabilities would be judged. Perhaps nothing better elucidates its importance to the tradition and practice of jazz than the fact that in all of Charlie Parker's known solos, the only form he improvised upon more often than 'rhythm changes' was the blues.²⁹ Because it is so important to the history of jazz, the 'rhythm changes' form allows the chamber jazz composer the opportunity to pay homage to many of the different arrangement techniques associated with the form and to organize and alter them in a way that allows for personal expression.

Fig. 5-1 - "Seven Come Eleven" excerpt of Benny Goodman recording



²⁸ George and Ira Gershwin, *The Essential Gershwin Sheet Music Collection* (Van Nuys: Alfred Music Publishing Co., Inc., 2010), 62.

²⁹ Thomas Owens, *Charlie Parker: Techniques of Improvisation Volume 1* (PhD diss., University of California, 1974.)

The Benny Goodman band was one of the Swing Era's most popular groups and is still known today, not only for its popular recordings, but also for the important musicians that were a part of the group. Some of the most prominent names are vibraphone player Lionel Hampton, drummer Gene Krupa, pianist Teddy Wilson, and guitarist Charlie Christian. Goodman's recording of his own song "Seven Come Eleven"³⁰ (co-written with Christian) is one of his most well known 'small group' recordings and the composition is based upon the "I Got Rhythm" harmonic structure. The distinguishing feature of "Seven Come Eleven" is the bass-piano ostinato that is played on the A sections underneath the melody. This ostinato is shown in Fig. 5-1, transposed here to the key of Bb (from its original key of Ab) for ease of comparison. It is a simple, but nonetheless effective, eight-bar vamp that keeps the composition moving with a strong sense of forward motion due in part to the fact that it does not start on a strong beat, but rather an off-beat. Harmonically, it stays within the Bb tonality, ending on an Eb note the first three times (in bars 2, 4, and 6) and then finally resting on a Bb the last time, giving the eight-bar vamp a sense of overarching structure and a strong resolution.





³⁰ Charlie Christian, *Charlie Christian: The Genius of the Electric Guitar*, Sony Music Entertainment Inc., 88697930352-1, 2002 [original recording November 1939], compact disc.

The piano-bass ostinato from "Sweet Tooth" is shown in Fig. 5-2. This ostinato shares many similarities with the Goodman ostinato, but has some key differences that give it a different sound. Rhythmically it is the same except that instead of starting on the 'and' of beat 1, the figure starts a full quarter note later on the 'and' of beat 2; this lends the figure a feeling of almost being "rushed" and imparts a strong rhythmic impetus to the section. Melodically, the "Sweet Tooth" figure gives a stronger sense of the Bb tonality than the Goodman figure as it utilizes the first five notes of the Bb major scale – Bb, C, D, Eb, and F. In bars 2, 4, 6, and 8 we can see that the "Sweet Tooth" figure resolve in the same way as "Seven Come Eleven", i.e., to the Eb the first three times and to the Bb the last time. The 'rhythm changes' form follows an AABA structure, and the "Sweet Tooth" ostinato is played by the piano and bass in every A section. This composition features a strongly bebop-influenced melody and the relative simplicity of the ostinato figure contrasts interestingly with the dense melodic line in the A sections.

Count Basie led one of the most important groups in the history of jazz. His style was in the Kansas City tradition of big band writing, featuring strong riffs and background figures and a rhythmic groove that was primarily meant for dancing. Basie's style has been a strong influence upon chamber jazz, including John Lewis' accompaniment figures in the Modern Jazz Quartet (as discussed in Chapter Two) and Ahmad Jamal's riffing and accompaniment figures.³¹ Many of the ensemble figures in the

³¹ Ahmad Jamal Trio, *Chamber Music of the New Jazz*, The Verve Music Group B0002682-02, 2004 [original recording May 1955], compact disc.

*Birth of the Cool*³² sessions also have a strong tie to the Basie style of ensemble writing. To pay homage to the Count Basie legacy and its enduring influence upon jazz, the arrangement for "Sweet Tooth" utilizes two important Basie arrangement ideas. The first comes at the beginning of the piano solo section, where the bass and drums are instructed to play a stop-time figure, as illustrated in Fig. 5-3.



The famous recording of the composition "Lester Leaps In" from 1939 features this same arrangement device and is used to feature the soloist, in this case tenor saxophonist Lester Young.³³ This stop-time device is used on all three A sections for the first chorus of the saxophone solo and it is used in the same way for "Sweet Tooth" as the background figure for the first chorus of the solo. This forces the soloist to rely solely on his or her own sense of time, instead of the rhythm section. It also provides a strong sense of tension that is finally released at the beginning of the second chorus when the rhythm section returns to playing regular time. Although this arrangement device originated in the Count Basie big band, it has become a standard arranging convention in the jazz

³² Miles Davis, *Birth of the Cool*, Capitol Records, Inc. 7243 5 30117 2 7, 2001 [original recording January 1949-March 1950], compact disc.

³³ Lester Young with Count Basie, *Classic Columbia, Okeh and Vocalion Lester Young with Count Basie (1936-1940)*, Mosaic Records L.L.C. MD4-239, 2008 [original recordings November 1936-November 1940], compact disc.

idiom, used by big band and chamber jazz arrangers alike. It is utilized in "Sweet Tooth" for three reasons: to challenge the soloist, provide a sense of structure that features tension and release in the ensemble arrangement, and as a conscious "tip of the hat" to the enduring legacy of the Count Basie band.



As mentioned earlier, the Basie band was known for its exciting and rhythmically propulsive background figures. One quintessential Basie figure occurs on the bridge section of the 1957 version of "Lester Leaps In" from *Count Basie at Newport* (it occurs at about 0:14 of the track).³⁴ This figure is a perfect encapsulation of the Basie band's background figures: it is rhythmically interesting, the band plays it in a driving, yet relaxed manner, and it is catchy with a singable "riff" melody. The figure is shown in Fig. 5-4, and we can see that the melody in bars 1-3 is repeated in bars 5-7 transposed down one whole step in order to "fit" the harmonic progression. One of the reasons this figure is so rhythmically propulsive is the anticipation of the proceeding chord we see on beat 4 in bars 2 and 6. This lends the figure a strong sense of rhythmic drive and forward motion, a crucial part of the Count Basie "sound." This figure appears in "Sweet Tooth" at section C4 in the piano part as the background figure behind the guitar solo; Fig. 5-4

³⁴ Count Basie, *Count Basie At Newport*, The Verve Music Group, B0009522-02, 2007 [original recording July 1957], compact disc.

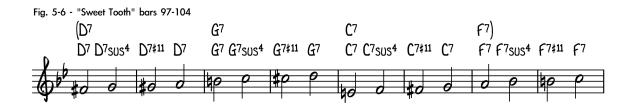
shows only the melody (the top note) of the figure, it is fully voiced out for piano in the arrangement. It is left unchanged in "Sweet Tooth" for the simple reason that it is so effective; it did not need to be changed in order to fit the aesthetic of the composition. It is the perfect way to add rhythmic drive and a strong melodic riff to the guitar solo section and is employed to pay tribute to the enduring legacy of the Count Basie band with its considerable influence upon the music in this thesis and the world of jazz as a whole.

In "Sweet Tooth" the guitar part utilizes a couple of different techniques in the background of the piano solo to impart different sounds and textures. As mentioned before, the first chorus of the piano solo features a stop-time figure in the bass and drum parts, but the guitar enters in the second chorus playing background riffs and figures.

Fig. 5-5 - "Sweet Tooth" bars 81-82



The A sections of the guitar background part feature the repeating two-bar riff shown in Fig. 5-5. The influence for this figure is drawn from Lionel Hampton's vibraphone background to Charlie Christian's solo on the aforementioned recording of "Seven Come Eleven." Hampton uses the same melodic principles we see in Fig. 5-5 with the emphasis on the Db, the flatted 3rd of the key, also called the "blue" note. While Hampton does play this exact figure as it appears in Fig. 5-5, he also improvises around the figure creating variations in the same melodic/rhythmic vein. The guitar part could have read something like "improvise a background figure in the style of Lionel Hampton." However, this would not be in keeping with the chamber jazz ethos of regulating the ensemble figures in order to produce a more streamlined group sound; the figure is written out exactly how it is meant to sound, no improvisation is needed. This riff behind the piano solo creates tension that allows the solo to build as well as giving the pianist something to play off of in his or her improvisation. The tension created by this riff figure is temporarily relieved in the bridge section of the piano solo when the guitar switches to a more "open" style of background figure reminiscent of a woodwind or trumpet section.

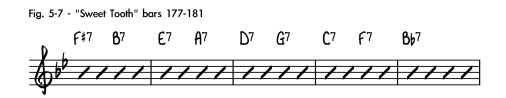


The background figure as described above is an effective accompaniment even though it is just a single note line. However, the chord voicing options available on the guitar are quite extensive and the chamber jazz arranger would be remiss not to take advantage of the instrument's unique harmonic capabilities. Fig. 5-6 presents the guitar's background part in section C3 of "Sweet Tooth." The melody that is shown in Fig. 5-6 is the top note of the guitar voicing; different guitarists will voice chords differently so it is left up to the discretion of the individual to decide how to do so. The melody in bars 1-4 is repeated in bars 5-8 transposed down one whole step in order to fit the harmonic structure. One will notice that the melody moves upwards and has a strong chromatic character. In order for the harmonic progression to "work" with the melody, the original chords have been changed to more colourful harmonic options. The original chords are included above the staff in brackets to better elucidate how much the new chord progression has changed while at the same time still adhering to the fundamental structure. For example, in bar 2 there is a G#4 in the melody, but because this note does note fit within a plain D7 harmonic framework, the chord has been changed to a D7^{#11}. This particular figure is reminiscent of what a woodwind or brass section might play as a background "pad," in that it is rhythmically staid and dynamically soft so that it enriches what the soloist is doing without diverting the listener's attention. These two different guitar background parts exhibit some of the core aesthetic principles of chamber jazz; there is a strong sense of honouring the history of jazz as well as utilizing all of the textural and sonic options of the instruments in the ensemble, in this case the guitar.

As discussed previously, the 'rhythm changes' form has been popular with jazz musicians since the 1930s. But jazz musicians are always looking for new ways to approach old material and have been constantly reharmonizing the standard 'rhythm changes' harmonic structure to fit their compositional or improvisational needs.³⁵ There

³⁵ Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book*, 237-244. Chapter Eleven of this book deals in-depth with the history of 'rhythm changes' and the abundance of reharmonization options available.

is one particular reharmonization used on the A sections of 'rhythm changes' (shown in Fig. 5-7) that is closely associated with the music of Thelonious Monk.³⁶



Monk is a jazz icon of the highest stature whose compositional and improvisational genius has been a inspiration upon the music in this thesis and through his preference for this particular reharmonization option it was adopted for use in "Sweet Tooth." Before the statement of the final melody there is a 32-bar trading section with the ensemble playing a four-bar figure followed by the drums playing a four-bar solo. Each time the A section of the progression comes around, the reharmonized progression is stated with added rhythmic figures as shown in Fig. 5-8. The idea is to take a conventional reharmonization technique idiomatic to one of jazz's leading figures and apply it to the chamber jazz aesthetic. In this case it is utilized as an ensemble figure that is meant to jump out at the listener because it is so rhythmically driving and so sonically different from what precedes it in the arrangement. Although it is a commonly played alteration of the original progression it is exploited in a unique manner and is utilized to express a personal conception of the composition.

³⁶ Thelonious Monk, *The Best of Thelonious Monk* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2006), 91-92. The transcription of "Rhythm-a-ning" in this collection shows Monk using this progression rather judiciously.



The harmonic structure of the 'rhythm changes' form allows for much creative freedom. The chords can be substituted, re-coloured, or completely reharmonized to allow for the maximum amount of creative freedom for the improviser, composer, and arranger. As we have seen in "Sweet Tooth," completely reharmonizing a part of the progression is not unheard of. As we have seen in the case of Thelonious Monk, it is just another way of altering the progression to allow for a more personal conception of the composition. Because so many different jazz ensembles have utilized the 'rhythm changes' form, bringing to it their own unique musical conceptions, there is an abundance of arrangement, compositional, and melodic/harmonic ideas to draw influence from. As we have seen in the case of "Sweet Tooth" some of these influences can be rather explicit, taking exactly what a larger group has done and applying it to the instrumentation of the chamber jazz ensemble; other times the influence is less clear, drawing more abstract ideas from different groups in a broader sense and applying them in a personal manner. But in any case "Sweet Tooth" is an example of drawing influences from all kinds of groups from many different eras of jazz, filtering them through the lens of chamber jazz and coming out on the other side with a personal approach to the idiom.

Chapter 6: "The One I Run To"

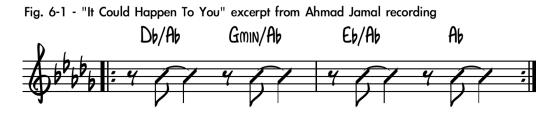
There are several musical forms that have been integral to the development of jazz and although the blues is the most important there are many others that are certainly quite essential to common jazz practice. Among them is the 32-bar song form. From the earliest days of jazz, musicians have used the popular songs of the day within the jazz idiom, so much so that it has become a cornerstone of the art form. These popular songs were taken from Broadway musicals, films etc. and were written by such composers as George Gershwin, Richard Rodgers, Hoagy Carmichael, Jerome Kern, Henry Mancini, to name but a few. Collectively, these songs have become known as the Great American Songbook. They form the bulk of the jazz repertoire and it is expected of every professional musician to know these compositions "by heart."³⁷ Of these popular songs. the 32-bar song form is without a doubt the most conventional, and within this form there are two common types. The first is the AB form – meaning a sixteen-bar A section followed by a sixteen-bar B section with a variation upon the melody in the final eight bars. Examples of this form include: "Whispering," "All of Me," "Days of Wine and Roses," "Pennies from Heaven," "It Could Happen to You" and literally hundreds more. The second type is conventionally know as the AABA form – meaning two eight-bar

³⁷ Ted Gioia, *The Jazz Standards: A Guide to the Repertoire* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2012). This book is an extraordinary compilation of more than 250 of the most oft-played jazz standards as well as a brief historical summary of each composition as well as recommended listening – highly recommend for anyone interested in further exploring the Great American Songbook.

sections with more or less the same melody and harmony followed by an eight-bar "bridge" section (the B section) and then another eight-bar A section to close out the form. Some jazz standards that use this form are "Just You, Just Me," "Body and Soul," "Honeysuckle Rose," "Misty," "Oh! Lady Be Good!," and many more. Because the 32bar song form is so integral to the jazz idiom, it was crucial to include at least one composition in this style. "The One I Run To" uses the latter type, AABA, with a melodic and harmonic conception comparable to the style of the Great American Songbook. Let us first look at how the influence of Ahmad Jamal has influenced the formal style of "The One I Run To."

As discussed in Chapter One, Ahmad Jamal is one of the founding figures in the chamber jazz movement. From his earliest recordings with the guitar-piano-bass format through to his incredibly popular and influential mid-late 1950s piano trio format (piano-bass-drums) Jamal has always stood on the forefront of small group innovation. Ahmad Jamal was a virtuoso improviser and pianist with a deep understanding of the blues and the many styles of jazz piano that had come before him, from Bud Powell to Errol Garner to Earl Hines, to name but a few. But is perhaps his focus upon arrangements within the small group format where he exhibits his true genius. Ahmad Jamal used every tool at his disposal to inject his repertoire with a real sense of orchestration and structure. One musical technique he employed often and to great effect was the vamp, a superb example

of this is on his recording of the Jimmy Van Heusen/Johnny Burke composition "It Could Happen To You" from his record *Portfolio of Ahmad Jamal.*³⁸



On this recording Jamal uses the vamp, shown in Fig. 6-1, at the end of each chorus, giving the listener a much more defined sense of the composition's structure (this example first occurs at approximately 0:48 of the track). Harmonically this vamp is essentially the standard I-VI-II-V turnaround that leads back to the tonic chord at the beginning of the form with a dominant pedal (Ab) in the bass. The second chord in the progression appears initially to be out of place, the VI chord that is normally there would in this key be a Bb7. The notes of the Gmin triad with the bass note Ab combine to form a Bb7⁽¹³⁾ chord: Bb is the root, D the 3rd, Ab the b7th, and G the 13th. "The One I Run To" has a vamp section that functions in the same way as Jamal's does in "It Could Happen To You."

³⁸ Ahmad Jamal Trio, *The Complete Ahmad Jamal Trio Argo Sessions 1956-62*, Mosaic Records L.L.C. MD9-246, 2010, compact disc. This collection is of Ahmad Jamal's entire body of recorded work for the Argo label, the album *Portfolio of Ahmad Jamal* [original recording September 1958] is included in this box set – his albums from this period are difficult to find on individual compact discs.



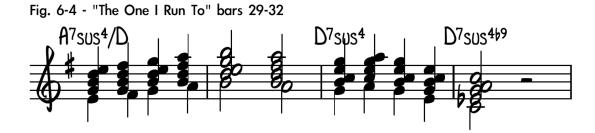
In Fig. 6-2 the eight-bar vamp section of "The One I Run To" is presented. Once again, this section is used at the end of each chorus, and as beginning and ending vamps to the composition. Additionally, a two-bar break is included for each soloist, a device commonly used in the jazz tradition. The harmonic structure of this section is somewhat simpler than Jamal's vamp, but it functions in the same way; the dominant pedal is used (in this case D) in the bass and a harmonic progression is used to lead back to the tonic chord. The chord Bmin/D is in actuality a Gmaj7 voicing, the tonic of the key. The chord Bmin contains the notes B, D, and F# which are the 3rd, 5th, and 7th of Gmaj7. In this instance the root is omitted from the voicing, a common jazz technique. This vamp toggles between the tonic (Bmin/D) and the dominant (D7sus4) until it finally resolves to a G major triad. Although the harmonic progression is somewhat simplified from the Ahmad Jamal version, it is more rhythmically dense and varied. The idea behind the vamp section was once again to take a musical device common to the chamber jazz idiom and modify it for a new composition in order to express a personal aesthetic conception.

The arrangement for this composition features the guitar stating the melody on each of the A sections (the song has an AABA form) with the piano taking over on the B sections (the bridge) – this is done for a number of reasons. Just a simple change in instrumentation immediately gives a new texture to the bridge, on top of which the piano is voicing the melody in the "Shearing Style" giving the section an added textural variation as well as more drive and energy. This also frees up the guitar for a counterpoint line, which will be discussed shortly.



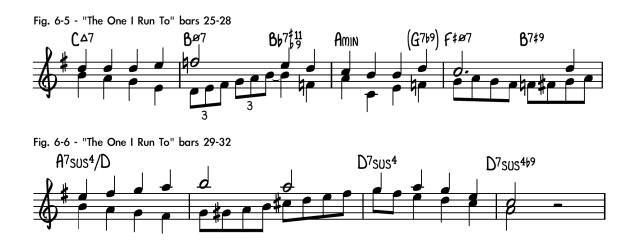
The first 4 bars of the bridge section plus the pickup bar are shown in Fig. 6-3. Once again, the melody is harmonized with the "Shearing Style" technique (i.e., with the top note doubled down an octave). There are two chord symbols written in brackets in this section that represent the chords implied by the voicing, but are not actually a part of the song's harmonic progression. In the pickup bar, there is a G7sus4 chord on beat 4. The reason the G7 chord has to be presented as a sus4 chord is because the 4th degree of the scale is in the melody. As discussed in Chapter Two, the 4th scale degree on a dominant quality chord is an avoid note, therefore the chord quality has to be changed to fit the melody note; the G7sus4 chord still functions as a dominant chord, resolving smoothly to the Cmaj7 chord in bar 2. In bar 4 there is a $G7^{b9}$ chord on beat 4 that at first glance seems completely unrelated to the Amin chord in the same bar. However, when an arranger is harmonizing a melody he or she can choose to add passing chords where appropriate. These passing chords are usually related to the proceeding chord through a V-I cadence. They add harmonic interest to an otherwise static harmonic part as well as providing a stronger sense of forward motion towards the chords they are resolving to. In this instance, the D melody could have been harmonized as an Amin11 voicing, but a

 $G7^{b9}$ chord was chosen to give the melody a stronger sense of harmonic resolution when it lands on the F#min7^{b5}. In this case the G7^{b9} still has a dominant function as it is the tritone substitute for C#7, the V of F#min7^{b5}. The remaining four bars of the bridge are shown in Fig. 6-4 and we can see that the integrity of the "Shearing" concept remains. Additionally, there are no passing chords added to these bars as the melody allows for a more straightforward harmonization.



Along with the "Shearing Style" voicing of the melody, the guitar part for this bridge section is a complex contrapuntal accompaniment. In order to better understand the relationship between the melody and the counterpoint, both voices are shown in Fig. 6-5 (the melody is the top voice and the counterpoint is the bottom). In bar 1, the melody is mostly static, so the guitar line counters the oblique motion with a downward moving line. On the Bmin7^{b5} chord in bar 2, the guitar lands on a D4 creating a minor 10^{th} interval with the F5 in the top voice. Taking advantage of the space created by the half note in the melody, the bottom line moves up in eighth-note triplets expressing the B Locrian scale that strengthens the B half-diminished sound. In bar 3, the melody line unfortunately does not give a strong sense of the Amin harmony, but the guitar uses all three notes of the chord (A, C, and E) in the counterpoint line. And on beat 4, the counterpoint line adjusts to the quick G7^{b9} chord in the piano part with a strong sixth

interval between the voices that fortifies the sound of the passing chord. The top line in the fourth bar is rather sparse so the counterpoint fills up the space with an eighth note line.



In Fig. 6-6 the last four bars of the bridge section are shown. In bar 1 we see a strong example of contrary motion between the two voices with the melody moving upwards in stepwise motion and the bottom voice moving downwards in stepwise motion. From bar 2 to the beginning of bar 3 the melody is moving downward; the counterpoint line once again moves in contrary motion to the top voice. In bar 2 we see what is known as the A Mixolydian Bebop Scale with a passing note (G#) between the b7 and tonic scale degrees. This is done so that the chord tones will line up with the strong beats of the bar – in this particular example the G# passing tone allows the b7th of the chord to land on beat 1 and the 3rd of the chord to land on beat 3.³⁹ The melody line moves in a general downward motion towards the final bar resulting in similar motion

³⁹ Levine, *The Jazz Theory Book*, 171-182. Chapter Seven delves in-depth into the theory and practice behind the bebop scales.

between the two voices. In addition to writing a well thought-out counterpoint, it was important to write a line that would be interesting for the guitarist to play. It is hoped that through the use of scalar patterns, contrary motion, and bebop scale theory that this goal has been accomplished.⁴⁰ As we have seen in Chapter Two, counterpoint is a strong arrangement concept that has long been utilized by chamber group writers. This particular instance is a variation on what is seen in "Blooh E." and features a lithe, bebopinfluenced counterpoint line in the guitar part set against not a single line in the piano, but this time a dense five-voice texture. Once again, this shows that having a command of the different textures and techniques available to each instrument in the ensemble is crucial to the chamber group arranger in order to get the most out of the musicians.

Formal concerns are always paramount to the perceptive arranger. He or she knows that vamps, interludes, intros, outros, and the like are what give an arrangement structure and character. And these concerns can be used as a vehicle for personal expression as much, or more, than instrumentation, voicing, and textural concerns. Certainly Ahmad Jamal understood this idea well; his small group conception was based as much upon the formal aspects of the composition as it was his soloing style or how he voiced his chords. He worked within the confines of the trio format and brought a whole new style of personal expression to the idiom. His ideas have greatly informed all of the compositions in this paper, especially "The One I Run To." It has also been shown once

⁴⁰ Dobbins, *Jazz Arranging & Composing: A Linear Approach*. The notion that a harmony part should be attractive, both as a functional harmony line and as a stand-alone melodic voice, is one espoused by Dobbins in this exceptional treatise on jazz arranging.

again how far one can "stretch" the sound of the ensemble with the use of counterpoint. This time the contrapuntal line is set against a five-voice piano structure, but the idea remains the same: to express a more thought-out, considered style of small group writing vital to the sound, and respectful to the tradition, of the chamber jazz idiom.

Chapter 7: "Mr. Montgomery"

In 1959 Miles Davis released his most popular album ever, Kind of Blue. In fact it is one of the most popular jazz albums of all-time, regularly topping jazz bestselling lists year after year. It is difficult to pin down what makes this album so popular. Perhaps it is the relaxed quality of the music, or the beautiful compositions that fill the album, or a combination of many other factors. However, it is easy to pinpoint what makes the album so musically significant and that is the modal quality of the music. Davis had consciously shifted the focus shifted away from the dense harmonic structures and fast tempos that came to define bebop music and moved towards more relaxed tempos that allowed the musicians to explore the compositions, which sometimes had only two chords. Modal music is a challenge for the improviser as well as the composer because of the lack of harmonic motion; it forces one to think in a more melodic way, using the scale to derive solo and arrangement ideas. "Mr. Montgomery" is a modal tune with an AABA structure: the first A is in the D Dorian mode, the second A shifts up one whole step to the E Dorian mode, and the last A returns to the D Dorian mode. The B section contrasts the static harmony of the A sections with a fast moving chord progression that gives the composition a sense of release from the tension of the modal sections. Let us now turn our attention to the musical ideas and techniques in "Mr. Montgomery" that are crucial to its unique sound.



Although "Mr. Montgomery" is primarily a modal composition, within this sparse harmonic framework interest can still be added through the use of cadences within the key center. These cadences are employed as stop-time shots played by the piano, bass, and drums in the "cracks" of the melody. In Fig. 7-1 we see the first four bars of the melody; although there are five bars in the example, the first is a pickup bar (to the melody). All of the notes in this example fall within the D Dorian scale, and we can see how the rhythm section shots (written above the staff) fill in the holes left by the melody. This creates an interesting "call and response" sound that has been utilized countless times by jazz composers. Some popular examples of this compositional technique are Miles Davis' "So What,"⁴¹ Horace Silver's "Sister Sadie,"⁴² Bobby Timmons' "Moanin',"⁴³ and Wes Montgomery's "Jingles."⁴⁴ These shots also utilize quick cadences within the overall D minor tonality bringing a sense of harmonic motion to an otherwise static section. In the first bar there is a perfect cadence, with the $A7^{b9}$ (the V of the key) moving to a Dmin6 (the I of the key). In bar 4 there is a plagal cadence with the G major triad (the IV of the key) resolving to the Dmin6. As discussed in Chapter Four, the IV-I

⁴¹ Miles Davis, *Kind of Blue*, Sony Music Entertainment Inc., CK 64935, 1997 [original recording March-April 1959], compact disc.

⁴² The Horace Silver Quintet, *Blowin' The Blues Away*, Capitol Records Inc., 7243 4 95342 2 3, 1999 [original recording August-September 1959], compact disc.

⁴³ Art Blakey and The Jazz Messengers, *Moanin*', Capitol Records Inc., 7243 4 95324 2
7, 1999 [original recording October 1958], compact disc.

⁴⁴ The Wes Montgomery Trio, *Wes Montgomery Trio*, Concord Music Group, Inc., Riverside OJCCD-034-2, 1991 [original recording October 1959], compact disc.

cadence is a defining feature of gospel and church music that lends a strong sense of the blues "feeling" to "Mr. Montgomery."



In Fig. 7-2 we see the last four bars of the first A section. The harmonic motion is the same, a V-I cadence followed by a IV-I cadence, but the rhythm is changed slightly. In Fig. 7-1 the rhythm section shots employ the "Charleston" rhythm; this is a strongly idiomatic rhythmic device that lends a sense of forward motion to holes in the melodic line. However, in bar 1 of Fig. 7-2 the Charleston figure is replaced with two offbeat eighth notes. These shots still fill in the holes of the melody but the slight variation adds an interesting deviation from the Charleston rhythm and builds upon the rhythmic tension inherent in a stop-time section.

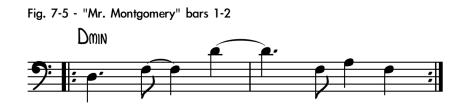


At the start of the second A section, as shown in Fig. 7-3, we see the harmony moving up one whole step to E Dorian with the melody remaining solidly within the D Dorian modal framework. Although theoretically this makes little sense, the fact that the chords are not sounding simultaneously with the melody, which would create unpleasant dissonances, somehow allows it to succeed; the ear does not latch onto the fact that it is

theoretically incorrect, instead the listener just perceives a little bit more tension in these four bars. Within the E Dorian framework the cadences played by the rhythm section function in the same fundamental way: the B7^{b9} to Emin6 is a V-I cadence and the A major triad resolving to Emin6 is a IV-I cadence. Shifting the harmony up one whole step for four bars creates a great deal of tension that is eventually resolved when we arrive back at the D Dorian tonality of the final four bars of the second A section (shown in Fig. 7-4). From here the melody moves to the bridge section and then on to the final A section, which is virtually identical to the first, shown in Figs. 7-1 and 7-2. The melody section of "Mr. Montgomery" is another example of drawing influence from the jazz canon, in this case the idea of "call and response," and applying it in a personal manner to the chamber jazz idiom.

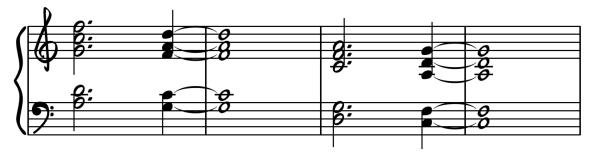


The opening of "Mr. Montgomery" features a bass ostinato that sets up the tonality of the piece and, along with the drums, the tempo and feel of the composition. The piano enters shortly thereafter and solidifies the tonality of the piece through the use of an interesting and idiomatic piano voicing technique worthy of further analysis.



The bass opens "Mr. Montgomery", playing the two-bar repeated ostinato unaccompanied, shown in Fig. 7-5. Rhythmically there is a strong Latin influence in the ostinato. The first bar outlines the Cuban clave rhythm, and when the drums enter after eight bars they play around the Latin-influenced bass line, setting up the tempo and feel of the piece. One will notice that the chord symbol is a Dmin, not the Dmin6 that we have seen in the previous examples – this is a reflection of the ambiguous quality of the bass ostinato. The notes that make up the ostinato are D, F, and A, plus a high D, sounding an octave above the root note. These notes make up a D minor triad and do not imply any other tonality. For example, had a C been added to the ostinato it would have implied a Dmin7 sound; had a B been added it would have expressed a Dmin6/D Dorian tonality. The bass is expressing a general D minor tonality so that it does not clash with the piano introduction that features dense voicing structures expressing complex scalar relationships. The relative simplicity of the ostinato contrasts nicely with the relative complexity of the piano voicings. The first four bars of the introductory piano part are shown in Fig. 7-6. All of the notes in these piano voicings are part of the F major pentatonic scale; let us examine why this is so and how the voicings are formulated.

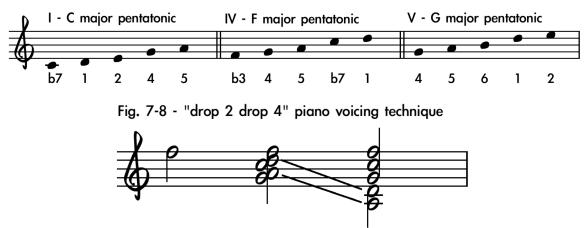




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The D Dorian scale is the second mode of C major. The I, IV, and V degrees of the C major scale are C, F, and G respectively. In a modal context, one can use the major pentatonic scales built from these roots as the basis for improvisation or voicing structures. These three pentatonic scales are shown in Fig. 7-7 and below the staff are written numbers to indicate the relation of each note to a D root. The only scale (of the three) that has the b3 and b7 is the F major pentatonic; this is so important because the 3rd and 7th are the guide tones of the chord – these two notes give us the fundamental character of the chord, whether it be major, dominant, or in this case minor. Looking once again at Fig. 7-6 we see that piano is expressing a Dmin7 tonality. Before moving on with the rest of the introductory phrase, let us look at the fundamental voicing structure of this section.

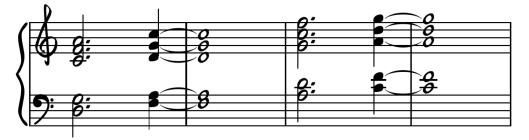




When writing this piano part, the melody was written first, taking into account all three of the pentatonic scales we see in Fig. 7-7. The voicings were extracted from this melody by harmonizing the melody note with its corresponding pentatonic scale. For

example in Fig. 7-8 we see an F5, the first melody note in the piano part (as seen in Fig. 7-6). Because the first scale being utilized is the F major pentatonic, the melody note is harmonized with this scale as closely as possible, as we observe in the second example in Fig. 7-8. The final step in creating a piano voicing is to do what is called a "drop 2 drop 4" voicing, meaning we take the closed voicing from the second example and drop the second and fourth notes (from the top down) one octave as indicated by the arrows leading to the third example.⁴⁵ This technique is followed for all of the piano voicings in the introductory section.

Fig. 7-9 - "Mr. Montgomery" bars 13-16

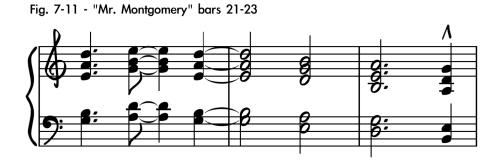


In Fig. 7-9 we see the next four bars of the introductory piano part. The F major pentatonic scale is still the source of the melody and the voicings, this time the melody is ascending rather than descending.

⁴⁵ Bill Dobbins, A Creative Approach to Jazz Piano Harmony (Advance Music, 1994).



In Fig. 7-10 we see the next four bars of the piano part. For these bars the scale source for the melody and voicings has changed from F major pentatonic to C pentatonic. Referring back to Fig. 7-7 we see that the C pentatonic scale has essentially substituted the b3 for the second degree above the root. This adds a new level of tension to the voicings as the b3, one of the structural guide tones of Dmin7, is removed in favour of a colour tone. The b7 remains helping to keep the voicing from sounding too far "outside" of the harmony.



The final four bars of the introductory part are seen in Fig. 7-11. Once again, a new scale source has been introduced, with G major pentatonic replacing C major as the melodic as well as harmonic reference. Referring again to Fig. 7-7 we see that the G major pentatonic is the furthest from the Dmin7 tonality. Both guide tones have been removed in favour of colour tones; this time the b7 has been replaced by the 6th degree of

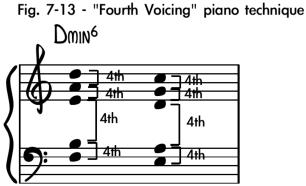
the scale. However, there is now a cogent sense of the D Dorian sound because the natural 6th degree is the characteristic note of the Dorian mode that gives it its distinct sound and character.⁴⁶ Looking at the larger picture of this sixteen-bar section, we can now see how the melody and voicings move from least to most tense: the first eight bars are based upon the F major pentatonic scale (which has both guide tones), the next four bars see the C pentatonic scale, and the last four bars are based upon the G pentatonic scale (the one that has no guide tones, only colour tones). This gives the section a sense of progression as well as an overarching structure. This introductory section also shows an adherence to the chamber jazz principle of having strongly pre-arranged sections based in idiomatic jazz practices.



In the second chorus of the guitar solo section of "Mr. Montgomery" there is a piano background figure, shown in Fig. 7-12. This figure repeats every two bars, starting at section A5, but in the interest of space only two bars have been included in the example. Once again, the figure is a Charleston rhythm starting on beat 3, giving it a strong sense of forward motion. The voicings used in this section are known as fourth

⁴⁶ Felts, *Reharmonization Techniques*, 123.

chords and are strongly associated with pianist McCoy Tyner as he "…was the first jazz pianist to play fourth chords extensively."⁴⁷ These voicings get their name because they are built exclusively upon fourth intervals, as shown in Fig. 7-13. All of the notes in both chords are from the D Dorian mode;⁴⁸ the voicings are constructed by taking the bottom note and adding fourth intervals diatonic to the scale on top. The first voicing was chosen because is contains the characteristic note of D Dorian: B n atural. The Charleston figure is expressed here using a long sound followed by a short sound. In this instance the long sound contains the B natural, giving the listener a strong sense of the D Dorian mode. The fourth structure is then moved down one step in order to add some melodic interest to the figure.



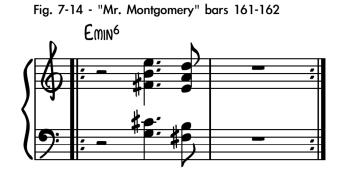
At section B5 the harmony moves up one whole step to the E Dorian mode.

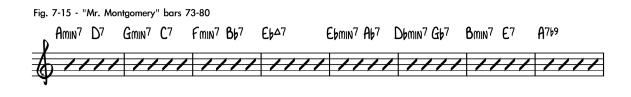
Consequently, the same piano figured is transposed to fit within the modal framework.

⁴⁷ Levine, The Jazz Piano Book, 105.

⁴⁸ The D Dorian mode is built from the second degree of the C major scale and uses only notes from the C major key signature; modes have their own melodic and harmonic tendencies and implications separate from their "parent" major scale.

The integrity of the fourth structure remains, as we can see in Fig. 7-14, and the characteristic note of E Dorian (C#) is once again emphasized within the rhythmic figure.





Although "Mr. Montgomery" is primarily a modal composition, the bridge section of the song is used to provide a release from the static harmony of the A sections. The progression is rather dense and features a descending II-V pattern commonly found in jazz harmony. As we can see in Fig. 7-15, the progression moves to two different key centers, Eb and A, with the final A7^{b9} resolving strongly to the D Dorian harmony of the last A section. The progression forces the improviser to "change gears" from the melodically-focused soloing style that a modal framework imposes to the more vertical bebop-style of improvisation that such a dense harmonic progression demands.

At first glance, modal compositions would appear easier to perform than songs with chord progressions. The improviser would only have to know two or three different scales to "get by" rather than having to improvise on a functional harmonic structure that requires one to know scales, arpeggios, and idiomatic soloing devices. But it is the lack of chords that 'trips-up' many musicians – they can no longer rely on the harmony to guide them, they must depend on their own melodic sense to make their solo interesting. For the composer and/or arranger, a modal framework presents a similar problem, i.e., how to make a composition or arrangement interesting in a static harmonic structure. In "Mr. Montgomery" we have observed some ways of subverting this issue with the use of cadential formulas, conventional jazz voicing techniques, pentatonic scales, and an extensive knowledge of modal theory that collectively add musical interest while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the static harmonic framework. Once again, the employment of theoretical concepts is one of the principles of chamber jazz and demonstrates a commitment to having a structured, well thought out composition/arrangement that utilizes these concepts in a musical and personal manner.

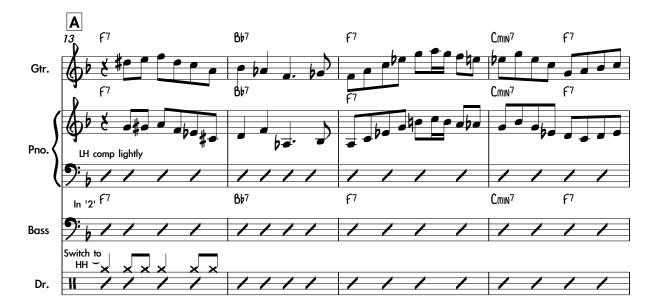
Chapter 8: Conclusion

One of the greatest challenges faced when writing the compositions herein was the ensemble configuration. It is difficult to write for instruments that one has no experience playing; one does not know first hand the range of the instrument, what type of textures are available – essentially what does and what does not sound "good" on the instrument. Arrangement texts give you an idea of the abilities of these different instruments, but nothing beats first hand experience. Because of this, I had to rely upon the expertise of the musicians I chose to work with to help make the individual parts sound as good as possible. This required much trial and error, but in the end it was certainly worth the effort. One of the reasons I decided to work with a guitar-piano-bassdrums quartet format is because these four instruments are the backbone of the jazz rhythm section. I wanted to get more experience writing for the rhythm section and to get a feel for what works with these four instruments individually and together. This can mean something as simple as how to format a bass part so that it is easy to read and something as complex as piano voicing concepts. These compositions also gave me the chance to challenge myself to write strong introductions, endings, vamps, interludes, etc., that are integral to the sound of a structured chamber jazz performance. Another challenge set forth at the beginning was to write within conventional jazz structures, e.g., blues, 'rhythm changes,' etc. This forced me to work within a confined structure and to make sure that the melodies make a strong statement in this limited amount of musical space.

There are many practical skills to be absorbed through this kind of project. As mentioned before, the ability to write a rhythm section chart that makes sense and is easy to read is crucial for anyone interested in working in any professional musical setting. Within these compositions there is a strong focus upon counterpoint between the piano and guitar; this is a textural concept I had not explored before and I hope to do more writing of this kind in the future. In a broader sense, seeking out music in the chamber jazz style has led me to artists I may never have explored otherwise. And the sheer amount of research involved has brought to my attention many different texts and manuals that I wish to further explore. My research into the history and inner workings of chamber jazz figures such as John Lewis and Ahmad Jamal has given me more perspective on their genius as well as their monumental contributions to the world of jazz. I am truly thrilled to further explore this area of the jazz world as I sincerely feel as though I am only at the beginning of a long and exciting journey.

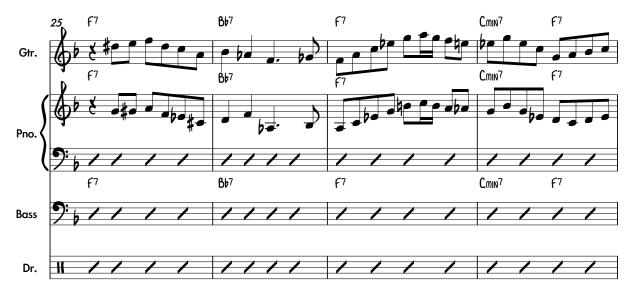
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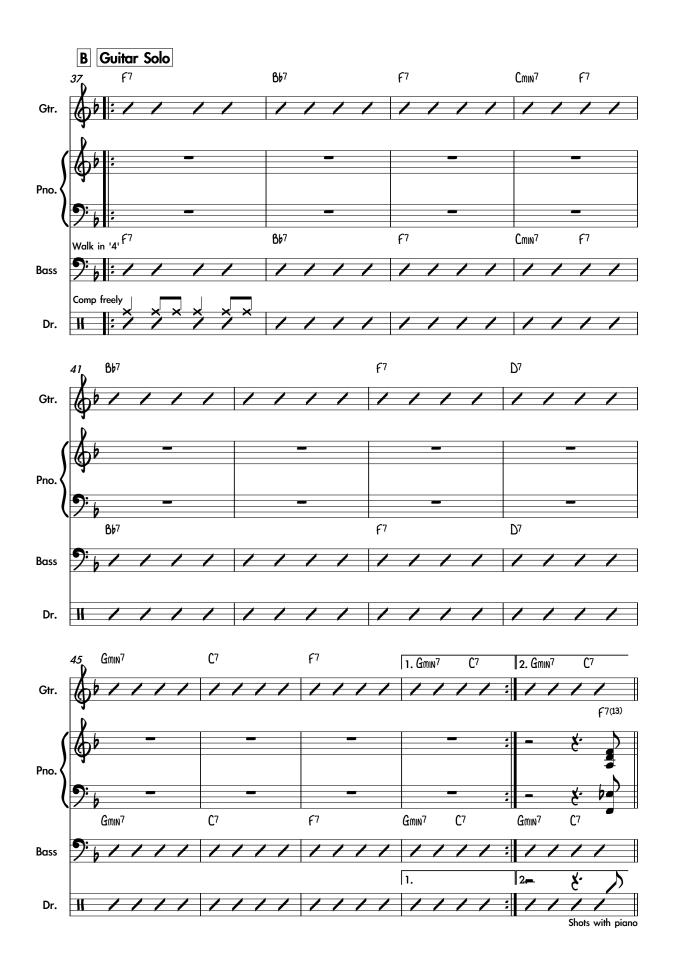


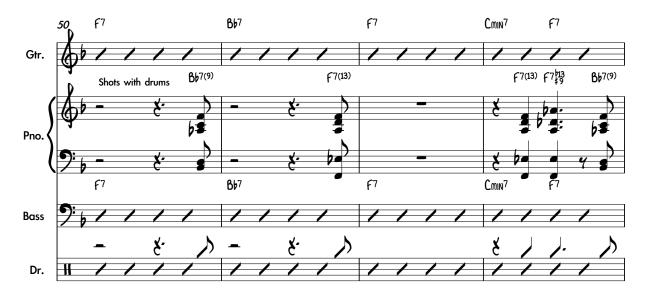


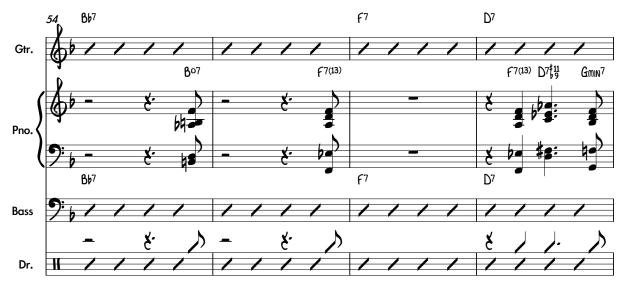


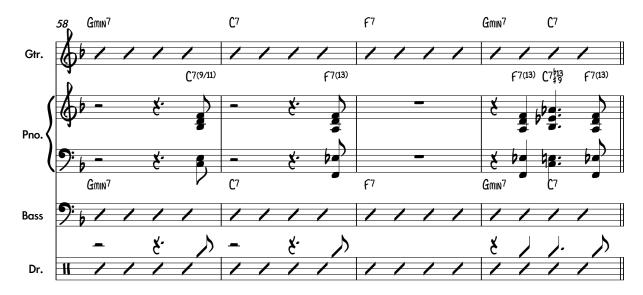


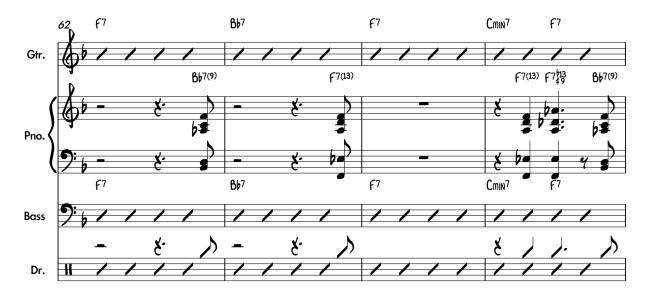


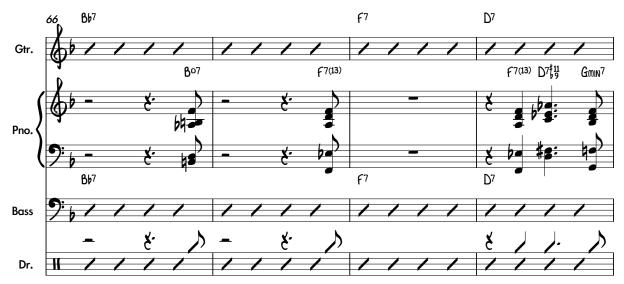


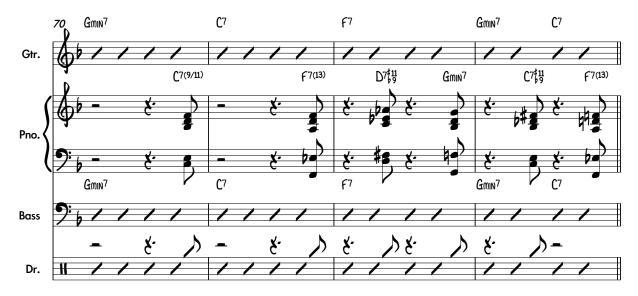












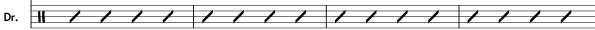








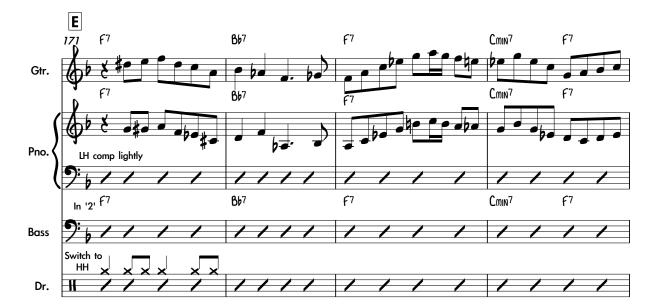






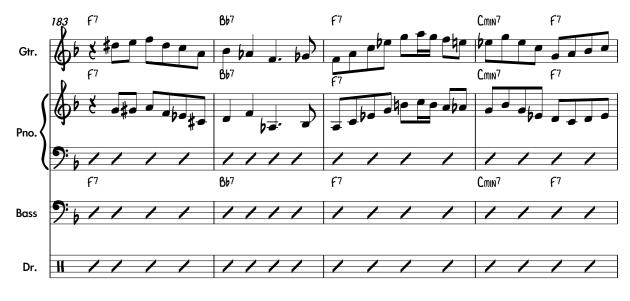
















Once, In Spring



















Down the Path















Sweet Tooth



























Tim Monis Intro Vamp Medium Swing _=120 BMIN/D D7sus4 D7sus4 BMIN/D 4x 2x : 4 Guitar ; ð \mathbf{F} Bmin/D D7sus4 D7sus4 Bmin/Ď 4x 2x 11 :/ 1 1 • Improvise over vamp Piano 000 8 0 Bmin/D ∎. D7sus⁴ -BMIN/D D7sus4 4x 2x 40 ; ; Bass 0 0 : 4 • Brush on RC 4x 2x ×× × Drum Set ť P BMIN/D D7sus4 G Guitar break 5 Gtr. 1. Guitar break D7sus4 BMIN/D G Pno. 0; 8 4 Guitar break D7sus4 BMIN/D G Bass Guitar break Dr. -#) Α **C**7**\$**11 **B**7≴5 Amin7 G∆7 E769 D7 Ø **B6**7 G∆7 AMIN7 D7 o θ 0 0 Gtr. **C**7*‡*11 **B**7≴5 G∆7 E769 Amin7 D7 G∆7 **B6**7 AMIN7 D7 1111 //// 1111 1111 Pno. E769 In '2' G∆7 **C**7\$11 **B**7≴5 Amin7 D7 G∆7 **B6**7 Amin⁷ D⁷ Bass //// //// //// //// 1111 41. //// Dr. -11 111. ////

The One I Run To





















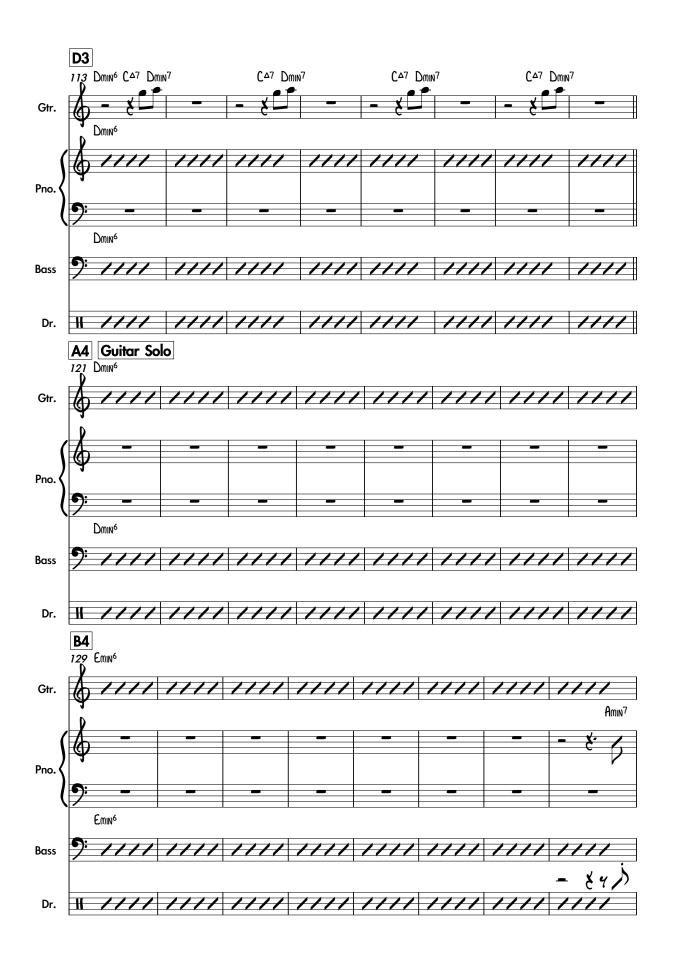


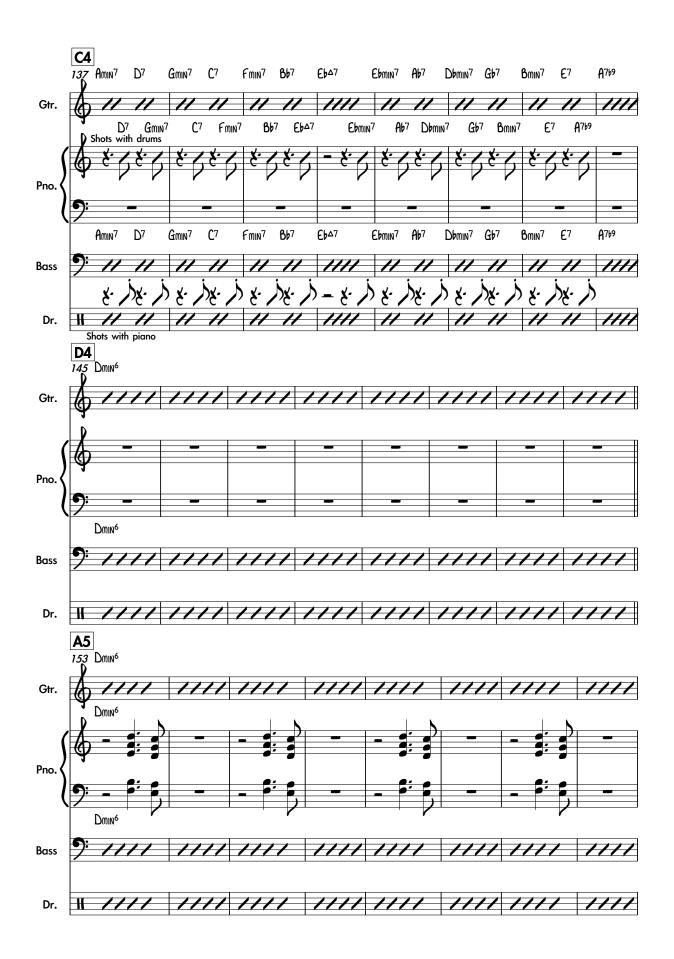










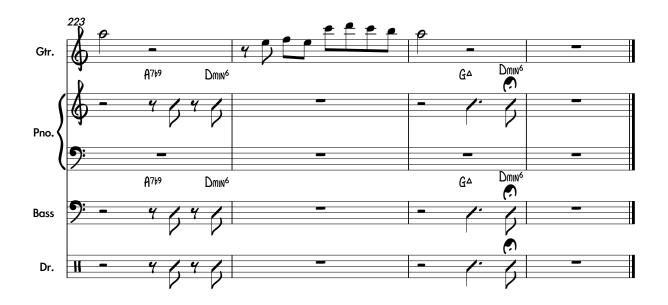












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